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The Saturday Review of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

VOLUME IX — NEW YORK, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 1933 — NUMBER 29

Wrapped in Cellophane

HERE is Dr. Gogarty saying that his old friend Joyce never smiles when he is humorous, and so is often misunderstood. "Ulysses," it appears, has not always been correctly read by serious-minded critics.

Critics of the United States have also, sometimes, taken the surface symptoms of their subject too seriously. As the expensive veneer of shaving-cream and interior-decorator civilization which advertising writers were making for us begins to crack up under stress of hard times, this country begins to have a different and rather familiar look. Standardization had not gone so far as we supposed.

Last summer one of the shrewdest observers of American life (name on request) travelled by bus with frequent stops from New York to New Mexico and back. It was his purpose to learn what was under the veneer of similarity that makes every American town look like every other American town, and every Main Street a little like Broadway. He talked in drug stores and speakeasies, he examined the magazine racks in the local news stores, he sat down in those creaky chairs at the edge of the dusty roads which Willa Cather describes in her stories of the corn belt, he listened in corner stores and post offices.

What he found was a smouldering resentment, not conscious, not articulate, but active, against the efforts to civilize the United States by snobism—those printed threats that not to use somebody's toothpaste meant social ruin, those persuasive pictures intended to prove that a stiff collar, a clean shave, and a sweet breath were silver rungs on the golden ladder of success. And he found that poverty, unrest, and insecurity were bringing out the repressed localisms, renewing an old and half-forgotten sense that it was important to be one's self in one's own community rather than a tailor's dummy made to look like New York. He noticed, with interest, that when he had crossed the Mississippi the natives began to speak of him as a "foreigner."

And he said that he felt a kind of dumb longing for a new ideal of living and working in the United States, which would be different from the brassy Babbittry of the advertising pages, and different from the conception of success which had been current since the war. The people were beginning to talk of the past with affection, wondering whether it would not be better, if it were possible, to go back twenty years and start over again. They seemed to be uncomfortably aware that the boom town with a headache in which they were living was not quite what had been intended. They had all the modern conveniences but they seemed, by comparison with their fathers, to be anonymous.

That is what he noticed, with that playwright's imagination that feels the significance behind casual words. And if he is right it is equally significant that for some years now biographies and histories dealing with the American past have become vigorous human documents full of life and color, instead of the "scientific" treatises to which the last generation aspired, and that regional fiction and historical fiction and drama have come back with a rush.

The standardizing processes of culture never cease so long as there is a civilization to spread, for standardization is only an efficiency method by which civilization

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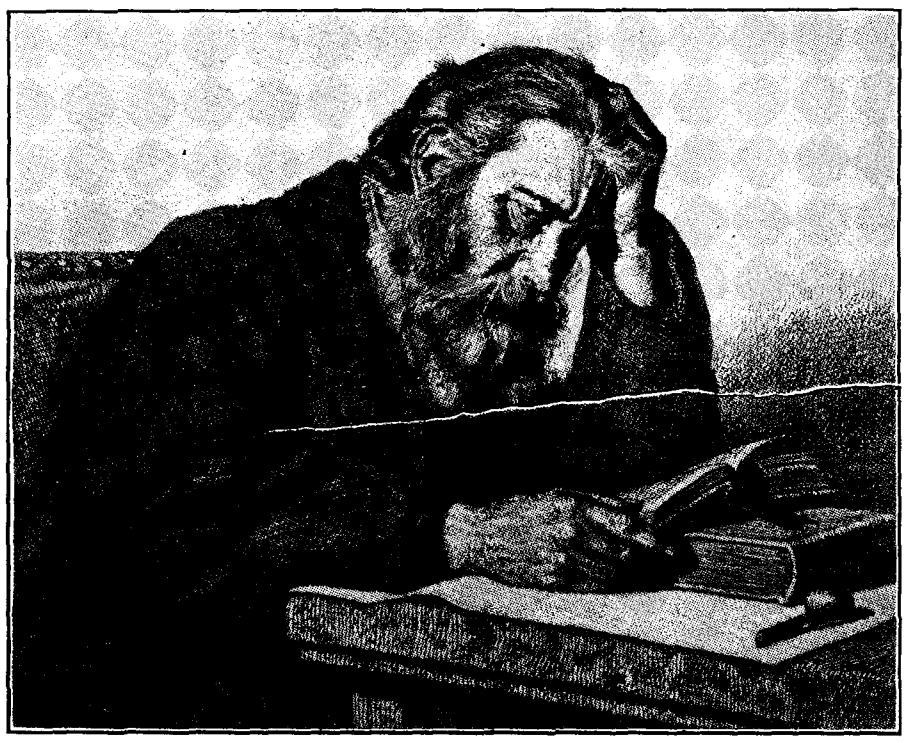

THE COURTEOUS READER.
Recaptioned from an etching by Paul Drury and reproduced from "Fine Prints of the Year 1932" (Minton, Balch).

Courteous Reader

By CHAUNCEY BREWSTER TINKER

Gentle Reader, I desire no better Patron for this my rusticke Dialogue then thy favourable smile . . . I referre my bold enterprise to thy best censure, and these homely lines to thy most favourable construction.—*A Curry-Combe for a Coxe-Combe.* **1615.**

MISS LAURA RIDING, high-priestess of the modern movement in English poetry, not long ago protested to the *Times Literary Supplement* about its reception of her latest poem, "Laura and Francisca." The reviewer of this unusual volume had described the poetess as employing "a gnomic mode of expression" and "a private idiom," which place the poem beyond the comprehension of the average reader. Not only must it be discovered that the two females referred to in the title are one and the same person (various projections, I assume, of a single ego), but one must accustom oneself to a highly individualized style in which the poem is described as

> A little all that more is
> According to the trouble you can take.

The reviewer seemed to imply that the number who would take the trouble was not large. At this Miss Riding took umbrage, and protested. The burden of understanding a poet's experience is, she contends, "on the reader"; the author cannot be the "slave" of persons of unknown capacity for response.

> The reader is in the position of calling on me, not of being called on by me . . . nor do I hawk my hospitality. I give out indication of my willingness to dispense hospitality on a basis that preserves my integrity as a host. When I say, "I am 'at home,'" I am being sincerely friendly. When criticism replies, "So am I," it is being meanly facetious.

Now all this is highly significant, not because of the wrath of the lady—for poets have been indignant at reviewers ever since they began to practise—but because of the way in which the reader is treated by the author. The hostess declines to make much of him or to woo him with jam and judicious advice. He must not expect the poet to supply him with wits or a "capacity for response."

The time is past when the reader could expect flattery and thanks from the maker of the book, who pretended that he cared for nothing else in life, inasmuch as it was for the gentle reader that the song was sung, and for him that the story was written. Even if the listeners were not many, it was proper for the poet to express a certain gratitude to them, and to boast of having an audience fit though few. But now the reader may half suspect that he is about to be shouldered out of the poetic world altogether. The poets too frequently suggest that they belong to an order apart, that they have decided to write for themselves and let the reader go hang. Their poetry is written to "release the ego," or to satisfy the performer, not the auditor. And so Miss Riding sits "at home,"

> Like a high-born maiden
> In a palace-tower,

easing her laden soul by singing to herself. If the wayfarer chooses to go in unto her, he must not expect to be welcomed with anything like gratitude, nor must he interrupt or ask to understand. He must not even pretend to comprehend too much of it all, because it is not for him that the music is sung. It is the utterance of an intensely vivid consciousness, which may or may not be intelligible to him, but which is "torturing" the unwilling words "to its own likeness." If the reader is incapable of a response, he had better retire quietly from the scene, and buy a detective story. The gods did not make him poetical, and there's an end on't.

Well, it has been thought through the ages that readers were all too prone to retire from the scene, and that such few as betrayed a disposition to remain and listen were worth winning. If a little cajolery would hold them, the poet did not hesitate to employ it. Thus Tasso, in lines finely rendered by the Elizabethan Fairfax:

(*Continued on next page*)

In the Trough

THE YEARS OF THE LOCUST (AMERICA, 1929-1932). By GILBERT SELDES. Boston: Little Brown & Company. 1933. $3.

Reviewed by WILLIAM MACDONALD

MR. SELDES tells the story of three fateful years, not primarily in terms of events, although his pages teem with statistics and data, but in those of public opinion and feeling, of what common people and leaders said and thought, and of certain doubts and tendencies which emerged from the gloom. Two-thirds of the way through the book he embodies his view of the period in a graphic "fever chart," in which a red line, "intended to mark, roughly, the psychological temperature and to record excitements, despairs, accesses of faith or scepticism, hopes, enthusiasms, and apathy" is imposed upon a black line showing the trend of prices of ninety selected stocks, with such legends as "the great smash," "within sixty days," "buy now," "wages cut," "moratorium," "draft Coolidge," "scraping bottom," and "crying for a dictator" marking the alternations of shock, fear, hope, and yearning. Nothing so vivid about the great depression, or so acute in its analysis of the national state of mind and the influences which produced and moulded it, or so well worth reading by whoever would get official dust and popular cobwebs out of his eyes, has yet been written about the tragic epoch which began in the fall of 1929 and, alas, is still with us.

The popular notion that the stock market crash in October, 1929, was due primarily to a speculative orgy in which everybody was involved finds no favor with Mr. Seldes. What broke down was a system which expanded production before there was a market, and then sought to create a market by advertising, high pressure salesmanship, instalment buying, and other devices. The crash, in other words, followed a boom which "carried with it the seeds of destruction." An ingenious and novel analysis leads to the conclusion that not more than 5,000,000 people, or one

This Week

WHY SOULS ARE HIDDEN.
By JOHN RUSSELL MCCARTHY.
"BULA MATARI."
Reviewed by ELLSWORTH HUNTINGTON.
"JEHOL—CITY OF EMPERORS."
Reviewed by ROY CHAPMAN ANDREWS.
"ART, LIFE AND NATURE IN JAPAN."
Reviewed by KENNETH SAUNDERS.
"TALKS WITH MUSSOLINI."
Reviewed by LEONARD BACON.
"BRITISH AGENT."
Reviewed by HAROLD NICOLSON.
"ONE MORE SPRING."
Reviewed by HERSCHEL BRICKELL.
"THE BRIDGE."
Reviewed by GEORGE DANGERFIELD.
"L'AIGLON."
Reviewed by H. L. PANGBORN.
THE FOLDER.
By CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.
AUNT ABIGAIL.
By MARY ROBERTS BERRY.

Next Week, or Later

THE MESSAGE AND THE MIDDLEBROW.
By MARGARET WIDDEMER.

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in twenty-five of the population, were "actually speculating" in 1929, and even that figure, Mr. Seldes seems to think, may be twice too large; but virtually the whole country fell victim to the boom.

Broadly speaking, the interval between October, 1929, and the presidential campaign of 1932 falls into two periods, the first characterized by a policy of doing nothing, in the hope that matters would presently right themselves, and the second by "the effort to do everything." The most conspicuous figure throughout is, of course, Mr. Hoover. Until the middle of 1930 Mr. Seldes sees Mr. Hoover as still a leader, but after that time the country knew that the President "would neither lead nor be led," and his titular leadership, "defending with bitterness the 'rugged individualism' which he believed to be the American system," took on in the public mind the character of "a complete negative." People listened to repeated assurances of early recovery, read Mr. Coolidge's daily articles, went temporarily crazy over miniature golf, watched the operations of the Red Cross and the multiplying plans for relief, saw the attempt to maintain wages collapse and unemployment mount, lost confidence in banks and the wisdom of business leaders, and turned with increasing interest to reports of industrial progress in Soviet Russia and the stream of proposals for national economic planning.

Mr. Seldes is inclined to defend, or at least to explain, Mr. Hoover's policy in the first period of the depression on the ground that, given his training, his surroundings, and his economic and political ideas, he could not well have acted differently. There is still restrained apology after the failure of the moratorium. Unlike the Chinese philosopher who is said to have written one of his greatest books while waiting for a customs examination of his luggage, Mr. Hoover "was compelled to write a philosophy while running for his life." Where a British or French premier could have laid his program be-

parliament and, if defeated, appealed
he country, Mr. Hoover had to act in
ation, without a popular mandate or
means of obtaining one.

The President was not a great political thinker, but his principles can be discovered in the dynamics of his action; he was slow to start because he believed in letting established forces alone as long as possible; he resisted change because he knew that America is not essentially a revolutionary country and hoped that the interaction of radical and reactionary principles would create a smooth compromise. He was a believer in institutions and would not scrap one which was working badly, to establish a new one, because the interval between the end of the old and the perfection of the new could leave us without directing force. Against the wild men of Congress he was a rock; but he was also a rock against the sane men when they did not share his principles.

The low point of the depression, Mr. Seldes thinks, was from the end of 1931 to midsummer of 1932—the period of deepening gloom over the demonstrated failure of the moratorium, of realization that general deflation was going on, of a new interest in fascism, and of the shock of Mr. Hoover's treatment of the bonus marchers at Washington. Then followed the presidential campaign, "conducted in an economic vacuum from which the candidates occasionally made a sortie to say something relevant." Reviewing, in a notable chapter, the career of "the great victim," Mr. Seldes again skilfully balances Mr. Hoover's strength and weakness. "The final judgment on Mr. Hoover," he writes, "does not depend on what he did, but on what capitalism in America does. If it recovers, it will owe more to Mr. Hoover than to any other man." His weakness, as Mr. Seldes sees it, was that the principles to which he doggedly clung did not fit the case, that the counsellors whom he summoned by battalions promised much and did little, and that the Congress which was elected in November, 1930, and which he would have had to deal with if he had called an early session, "represented dissatisfaction with his policies." Temperamentally he was irritable; "he was psychologically stupid"; he ignored what was

GILBERT SELDES.

"annoying or hostile"; "he had no capacity for speaking the public mind, none of reading the public thought, none for giving the public consolation or courage." "He had no eloquence; he made promises of small things to happen in a short time, but never suggested what the promise of American life meant to him and could mean to the American people. Perhaps he was as confused as the rest."

What, one is moved to ask, is Mr. Seldes's conception of "the promise of American life" which Mr. Hoover was never moved to suggest? He writes graphically of the failing strength of business in the fall of 1931, of the "deflation of moral values," and of mental values in criticisms of education, of the business individualism championed by the Supreme Court in the Oklahoma ice case, of the significance of the Dearborn riots and the farmers' strikes, of the futility of a Protestantism inextricably bound up with the years of boom, and of the ineptitude of Congress. It seems to him less important that a few good writers have turned Communist than that "a great number of excellent writers have obviously begun to feel a certain insignificance in their work," and he does not, apparently, expect much of socialism. When he comes to look at the future, however, he sees only a danger that capitalism, and with it American society, may collapse. The fundamental characteristic of capitalism, he points out, is "trust and hope in the future," and the symbol of capitalism is money, but trust and hope have not returned, and money has become "flighty." No crowds of unemployed have as yet sought to wreck machines, "but the civilization based on the machine can be wrecked just as surely if confidence in the future of the machine is destroyed." Mr. Seldes closes his brilliant study without answering any of the grave questions which he raises. Is it possible that at this point he is, like Mr. Hoover, "as confused as the rest"?

Why Souls Are Hidden

By JOHN RUSSELL MCCARTHY

WHO unveils his soul to the world
Is as a woman uncovering for a lover.

The mist of the spirit gone—
The silk of the body thrown back—
Defenseless, defenseless.

The body, soft and open and pitiful,
Seized, pierced, crushed, thrown aside.

The spirit, quivering naked and sensitive,
Tossed from hand to hand
Until it falls.

But the woman, though weeping, is pregnant,
While the soul is dead.

Courteous Reader

(*Continued from preceding page*)

Thither, thou know'st the World is best inclin'd
Where luring *Parnass* most its Sweet imparts,
And Truth convey'd in Verse of gentle Kind,
To read perhaps will move the dullest Hearts:
So We, if Children young diseas'd we find,
Anoint with Sweets the Vessel's foremost Parts
To make them taste the Potions sharp we give;
They drink deceiv'd, and so deceiv'd they live.

The dullest, you see, are worth saving; and the poet's function is comparable to that of the physician, who lures the patient to drink—and live.

But these are deserted heights of "Parnass," on which the school of Miss Riding has no desire to exist. She prefers to remain "at home," receiving her friends. One can but wonder how many guests there are. I remember to have heard the depressing story of a little girl who longed to give a party. All was made ready, sweetmeats prepared, the house decked out for a festive occasion, and the child gaily attired to meet her guests. But nobody came. The little girl, like Miss Riding, was "at home," and there the affair ended.

The notion that an author may preserve his "integrity as a host" is nonsense. A poet, like other writers, solicits a hearing, and the act of solicitation cannot be accomplished without a certain gesture towards the public. Touch print, and you will be, in some sense, defiled. For you, privacy and the cool charms of obscurity are gone. You have descended into the market place, and plead to be attended to. Between an orator on a soapbox shouting to the passerby, and a poet shyly proffering a slender volume of verse there is no essential difference in kind. Both insist upon being heard.

The Oriental story-teller, surrounded by a group of auditors ready to pay for their entertainment, is one of the enduring examples of poetic activity. Both poet and storyteller have wares for sale, and both of them profess to provide something worthy of attention—entertainment or instruction,—something, moreover, that shall, presumably, be of more value than the hearer's uninterrupted meditations. It is this that the poet has been offering to do ever since the bard in the "Beowulf" struck his lyre (if he had one), and cried "Hwaet!" to attract the attention of his listeners. The whole tradition of literature is in startling contrast to the modern contempt for the public. Hamlet, it may be recalled, knew that some of a dramatist's fine strokes were caviare to the general, but he was not above making verses for a play himself. But when Mr. MacLeish assumes the role of Hamlet today (in his "Hamlet of A. MacLeish"), he expresses a very different attitude to the public. In his bitter musings he comes to feel that to write poetry is to

shout
For hearing in the world's thick dirty ear.

There is, of course, no specific charge against readers today; but the notion seems to be that they are somehow representative of a great unwashed democracy, with mob-emotions. They have itching if not dirty ears. At other times they are held to be, for one purpose or another, mid-Victorian, sentimental, conventional, orthodox, lovers of Longfellow and tameness, and (often) a college professor.

Now it would seem to be logical, if the poets thus despise their readers, for them to keep silence. And thus, indeed, does the poet just quoted reason with himself:

O shame, for shame to suffer it, to make
A skill of harm, a business of despair,
And like a barking ape, betray us all
For itch of notice.
O be still, be still,
Be dumb, be silent only. Seal your mouth.

Yes, there is a sad and golden dignity about silence, but it lets the whole cause of poetry go by default. A Milton that is mute is a Milton that is inglorious. It is the lot of a poet to break silence, to make a spectacle of himself, to unpack his heart with words, to insist upon telling his grief or his grievance, his joy, disillusion, hope, fear,—what not. Poets are under the goad of the Muses. It is at once their glory and their shame.

It is often the poets' notion—and it is defensible enough—that the passion they utter is so sacredly intimate and so intensely personal that its criticism by individuals and its commendation by the public are very nearly an impertinence. It is true that in much of the world's finest poetry the note is so poignantly intimate that the reader feels almost as if he had his ear to the confessional screen. Nevertheless in his most piercing intimacies the poet cannot wholly forget that his art is essentially one of communication, or he will abandon language altogether and utter only inarticulate cries. And inarticulate passion is not poetry, but only its rough material. It is because of this that the poets have so often insisted that the emotion expressed in verse has somehow been altered since it was first experienced. It has suffered a sea-change into something rich and strange. It has passed through a crucible, been recollected in tranquillity, become "universalized" so that it is emblematic of the experience of many men, not merely of that of the poet alone.

The modern confusion in the reader's mind is paralleled in the bewildering disorder and rival claims of the poetic world itself. No historian of English poetry can feel any particular confidence as he attempts to record for posterity the state of things today. Schools have, of course, disappeared. It is not likely that poets intent on being as vividly personal as possible will ally themselves with any "Movement" or submit to the charge of following and (perhaps) imitating a Master. The very thing against which they contend is the authority of schools and movements and masters. But the freedom which they so ardently desire must be bought with a price, and the price is the shifting sand on which all poetic reputations today may be said to repose. Where will all these reputations be a half a century from now?

It is instructive to turn back for a moment and contrast the order and confidence of the late-Victorian world. I select a single and a homely example of what was thought of contemporary English

SWINBURNE, ONE OF CRANE'S CHIEF POETS, FROM A CARICATURE BY MAX BEERBOHM.

poetry exactly half a century ago. It was in 1882 that Mr. Kegan Paul put forth an anthology of verse entitled, "Living English Poets." It was, if I am not mistaken, edited by the youthful Canon Beeching, and it was furnished with a frontispiece in black and white drawn by Walter Crane in his happiest manner. It represented the slopes of Parnassus on which, in various attitudes, were represented the five chief poets of England who were still alive and active: Tennyson, Browning, Arnold, Swinburne, and Morris. The anthology contained, very properly, examples of the work of minor poets also: Miss Rossetti, Patmore, Newman, William Barnes, Austin Dobson, and others. The list was intentionally inclusive, but none of the names, except perhaps that of Sir Henry Taylor, is wholly forgotten or negligible today. The pleasant little volume represented a community of interests existing among poets, critics, publishers, and readers. The frontispiece is, however, more significant of the steadiness of critical opinion in the eighties than the contents of the volume. For Mr. Crane's five poets.

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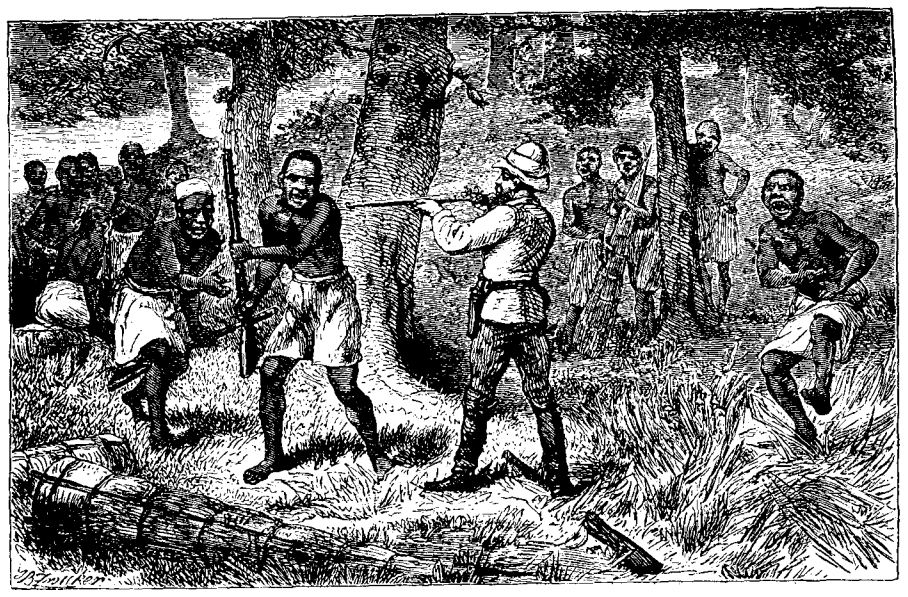
alive in 1882, are precisely the five that a historian of English poetry today would select to represent that world. All five—Tennyson, Browning, Arnold, Swinburne, Morris—are, in some sense, on Mount Parnassus, though no critic, naturally enough, would have the same ardor for any of them that he might well have felt fifty years ago. But these are the five that he would have to choose as forces to be reckoned with in nineteenth century poetry. D. G. Rossetti, Clough, and Mrs. Browning were all dead before the anthology appeared, and so do not complicate our case.

Now suppose an artist were confronted today with such a subject as was assigned to Mr. Walter Crane, how would he set about making a choice? How populate Parnassus today? Might he not well fear that his choice would be of so highly personal a kind as to displease the purchasers of the book? Might he not justly fear being ridiculous in the eyes of posterity? Shall he select Mr. Yeats, A. E., Mr. Housman, Mr. T. S. Eliot, and the Laureate? Does anyone now read the Laureate? Is Mr. Eliot himself still the leader of the younger school? Ought Mr. Humbert Wolfe to have a place? Or Mr. Sassoon? What has become of Mr. Graves? Would anyone seriously propose the name of Miss Gertrude Stein? And there is Miss Sitwell, who reads poetry through a megaphone. Is H. D. forgotten? Is Mr. Binyon still read? Is Mr. De la Mare to be remembered? Or Mr. Abercrombie? What a world! It is hardly surprising if the reader's mind spins at the thought of keeping in touch with it all. There is much in it that is admirable and lovely, but where is the critic who shall sift it out for us? And all this leaves out of account the whole realm of American poetry. But that is another story.

There is one last reason for the confusion in the mind of the gentle reader which it is deemed hardly permissible even to state nowadays. One must no longer lament the passing of standards or ask for any agreement among poets respecting fundamental matters such as metre, the nature of beauty, and the end and aim of poetic activity. Yet one cannot help feeling that it would be a good thing for the state of poetry and for the poets, too, if the courteous reader knew what it was all about, and felt that his smile and his "favorable construction" had something to do with its prevalence. It is no defence of the poets to say that our present Babel has been caused by the modern doubt of all ultimate truths, for it is just the office of poets to discover and to teach these very ultimates. If poets are ready to surrender this office to the scientists, then they and their readers are indeed in miserable plight.

That there are still poets alive who feel the necessity of some sort of central and constructive thinking is shown by the recent development of Mr. T. S. Eliot. The author of "The Waste Land" and "Ara Vus Prec" has never been considered timorous or stodgy, or inclined to range himself with the Tories of the literary world. He it was who flung conventions to the scrap heap and made way for the radicals to march in and take possession of the field. And then, because he could not rest with a philosophy of negativism, he made a definite act of allegiance, and announced to friends and critics alike that he had taken a stand. In the preface to his essays, "For Lancelot Andrews" (1928), he explained the exact nature of his allegiance in politics, in literature, and in religion. Great was the fluttering in the dove-cote of the minor poets. Followers fell away from him in grief and incredulity. Critics pointed him out with scorn. It may be doubted whether Mr. Eliot will, in our time, quite recover from the evil reputation which he won for himself as a man who knew exactly what he believed; but he had the honor of going straight to the heart of the modern difficulty. He revealed his conviction that spirits must be finely touched ere there can be fine issues, and so, by expressing his conviction that noble poetry can spring only from an august conception of the dignity of human life, he assumed at once a position among the poets of his time as distinguished as it was solitary.



AN ILLUSTRATION FROM STANLEY'S "HOW I FOUND LIVINGSTONE."

The Rock Breaker

BULA MATARI: Stanley, Conqueror of a Continent. By JACOB WASSERMANN. New York: Horace Liveright. 1933. $3.

Reviewed by ELLSWORTH HUNTINGTON

WHO should be the subject of a biography? This question is as important for readers as for authors. The current number of the *Saturday Review of Literature* contains reviews of books dealing with the lives of Jane Austen, Porfirio Diaz, Gabriele d'Annunzio, John Milton, Theodore Dreiser, and Benedict Spinoza. Previous numbers are similar. Biography apparently has today an unparallelled vogue. Perhaps this is no passing fashion but a permanent response to the fact that the proportion of elderly readers is rapidly increasing. Not many people enjoy biography to any great extent in their youth. It is mainly when we become older, mellower, and better able to compare our own experiences with those of others that we begin really to appreciate biography. The people who get the most pleasure out of biography are the elderly groups who have retired from active work. So perchance the decrease in the death-rate at younger ages and the increase in the proportion of our population over fifty years of age are leading to a permanent change in the relative importance of biography as a part of literature. This makes our first question still more pertinent: Who should be the subject of a biography?

In his life of Henry M. Stanley Mr. Jacob Wassermann gives his answer in an unusually interesting way. He was fascinated, it appears, by the innert conflict which dogged the whole life of Bula Matari, the Rock Breaker, as the Africans called Stanley after he made a road over the hills around the falls of the Congo. From beginning to end Stanley was tragically beset by a sense of failure in the midst of success, by a feeling that whatever he loved would turn against him, that although he might achieve the goal of his ambitions, the prize would turn to ashes in his grasp. He was also beset by the feeling that he must always be doing some new thing,—something greater than what he had done before. Even in his later years of quiet life in England he never could rest content because he was from first to last a doer—never a thinker or an adept in the mere art of living. Perhaps Stanley was no greater than Baker, Nachtigal, Rohlfs, Schweinfurth, Casati, and others who opened Africa in the second half of the last century. He was assuredly not so great as Livingstone. Nevertheless, as Wassermann pictures him, and as he doubtless really was, there is something intensely interesting about him. He is typical of our modern age in his unfulfilled longings. At his death he had the same frustrated feeling which wore on the spirit of Woodrow Wilson, and instilled in Theodore Roosevelt a restlessness that sent him to Africa and South America, and made him eager to get into the political game again even though there was no place for him on the team.

In view of all this it appears that Wassermann regards the spiritual evolution of the subject of a biography as more important than his outward deeds. From this it follows that even an unknown man may be a fit subject for a great biography, provided the author can know and depict his inner life. Yet great deeds are also necessary to make the best kind of biography, and these certainly stand to Stanley's credit. As a boy, I, too, like Wassermann, was thrilled by Stanley's rescue of Emin Pasha. When the two big volumes of "In Darkest Africa" were given to my father, they seemed to me an outstanding Christmas present. Of no other book do I specifically remember how or when it was given to my father. The reason for this clear memory is that the book itself impressed me deeply, and helped to make me a traveller, explorer, and geographer. What I remember best is how weary and disheartened we became as we pushed through the reeking rainforest and suffered the depressing weakness of fever, and then how we all exulted, fairly leaping with joy, when at last we emerged from the dark forest into the light and freedom of the grasslands. I say "we" advisedly, for rarely has any author made me so much a sharer in his trials and triumphs.

Of course the age at which I read the book had much to do with the depth of the impression. Yet I submit that a man who can so thrill a boy of fourteen and make him feel that thrill again forty years later must have some elements of greatness. I agree with Wassermann not only that Stanley's deeds were great, but that he sometimes rose to the loftiest literary heights. Listen to this:

> Nor at this time do we care to probe into that mighty mass of dead tree, brown and porous as a sponge, for already it is a mere semblance of prostrate log. Within, it is alive with minute tribes. It would charm an entomologist. Put your ear to it, and you hear a distinct murmurous hum. It is the stir and movement of insect life in many forms. . . . Lean but your hand on a tree, measure but your length on the ground, seat yourself on a fallen branch, and you will then understand what venom, fury, voracity, and activity breathe around you. Open your notebook, the page attracts a dozen butterflies, a honey-bee hovers over your hands; other forms of bees dash for your eyes; a wasp buzzes in your ear, a huge hornet menaces your feet, an army of pismires comes marching to your feet. Some are already crawling up, and will presently be digging their scissors-like mandibles in your neck. Woe! Woe!

A careful selection from Stanley's writings, as Wassermann well says, "would provide a series of descriptions of Nature that have never been surpassed."

As I now read Wassermann's analysis of Stanley's character I am astonished at the inner struggles of the man. I knew indeed that Livingstone did not really want to be found and turned back to die in the heart of his beloved Africa. I knew, too, that Emin Pasha was not even grateful for being rescued, and almost bit the hand that saved him. I was wroth with Major Barttelot for failing his chief in the great crisis when the rear column failed to advance and Stanley had to march back three months through the forest. Moreover, I was not unaware of Stanley's rather pitiful political attempts and the disappointment in which he closed his life. But as a boy these things made little impression on me. The thrill of the adventure filled my soul, and the music of the lyrical descriptions stuck in my mind. All this, I suppose, is due merely to the contrast between youth and full maturity. But Wassermann's analysis adds deep sympathy to my previous admiration for Stanley. I see how his lack of a home in his youth, the heartless conduct of his relatives, his workhouse experience, and his still unexplained alienation from the man who gave him not only the adopted name by which we know him, but his first real insight into human love, all combined to sear his soul. He failed to enjoy life because he never dared to forget both past and future in the joy of the moment. So Wassermann brings a new and peculiar pleasure because his book, coupled with my own experience of life, makes me understand and pity a man whom once I merely admired. It is because persons with experiences like mine are becoming relatively more numerous as the proportion of older people in our midst increases that I venture again to suggest that although the present craze for biography may subside, it will not wholly pass away. Being older we need more biographies than formerly.

In spite of the pleasure that I find in Wassermann's treatment of Stanley, I am surprised at two of his pet theories. One is his interpretation of Livingstone. He recognizes that Livingstone was a greater man than Stanley, a far greater man, I should say.

> David Livingstone, the "River-Seeker," as the natives called him, was in character and general aspect the precise opposite of Henry Morton Stanley. . . . Stanley an iron-willed man of action, Livingstone a dreamer; Stanley a conquistador and a newspaper reporter (a combination never before seen in the world), Livingstone a doctor and a missionary; Stanley eager to make all his doings instantly known to the world, Livingstone detesting nothing so much as he detested publicity, one whose main desire was to hide himself in the wilderness until the final release from his self-imposed tasks, and who would fain have kept his discoveries to himself. If one were to search for a preëminent specimen of those rare beings whose temperament and whose nobility of mind make them shun the limelight, despise fame, and loathe self-advertisement, assuredly having remembered Livingstone, we should be content.

The strange thing is not that Wassermann admires Livingstone, but that he claims to have discovered something new when he says that Livingstone did not stay in Africa because "he had become obsessed with the idea of discovering the 'sources of the Nile,'" as "both Stanley and the world believed." As a boy I pored over Livingstone's Journals and read and reread a little red book about him. He was my hero. And never till I read Wassermann's book did I suppose that any well informed person could doubt that Livingstone stayed in Africa because he felt that his great mission was to open the Dark Continent to Christianity.

The other surprise in "Bula Matari" is Wassermann's eager search for something erotic. But search as he will he cannot find a single trace of it in Stanley himself, for in this repect, as in his idea of duty, Stanley was equal to any Puritan of the Puritans. Yet Wassermann darkly hints that perhaps some erotic element was present, and not finding it in Stanley makes up a chapter about it in respect to the lost rear column on the march after Emin Pasha. Perhaps the white men of the rear column were interested in some of the native women, for men are men and women are women, but to build up a whole chapter of conjecture on this flimsy ground seems undignified, unbalanced, and unnecessary. Does Wassermann really understand the intolerably dilatory and unreliable character of the natives? Has he felt the inertia that assails one in the hot, wet, tropical forest and the depression and moodiness that follow malaria? These were probably far more potent causes of disaster than were any imaginary dusky sirens with whom Tippu-Tib wiled the white officers back to his headquarters. But this chapter is only a minor blot on a book that well deserves to be praised.

Ellsworth Huntington is research associate in Geography in Yale University and one of the most eminent geographers of the country.

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Where Armies Tread

JEHOL—CITY OF EMPERORS. By SVEN HEDIN. Translated from the Swedish by E. G. NASH. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1932. $3.50

Reviewed by ROY CHAPMAN ANDREWS

DR. HEDIN'S book on Jehol could not have appeared at a more opportune time. The drive of the Japanese army to assimilate the province of Jehol within the new state of Manchukuo has focused world attention upon this almost forgotten residence of the Manchu emperors.

In 1930 Dr. Hedin went to Peking for the purpose of making two replicas of a Lama temple—one for Chicago and one for Stockholm. The work was financed by Mr. Vincent of Chicago. I was in Peking at the time of Dr. Hedin's arrival and often consulted with my old friend about the proposed temple replicas. He made an exhaustive survey of the temples of Inner Mongolia but found none that would be suitable until he went to Jehol. There he saw at once that the beautiful Golden Pavilion was admirably suited for his needs. Under the direction of his associate, Dr. Gösta Montell, ethnographer, and his assistant, Georg Söderbom, measurements, drawings, and all necessary data were obtained by the Chinese architect and his native artist. The temple for Chicago has been erected and fully furnished. It is indeed a beautiful reproduction and reflects the greatest credit upon all who have been associated with its construction.

Dr. Hedin became so enamored of the charm of Jehol and its environs that he determined to embody his impressions in a book. In his foreword he says:

> With the help of fantasy, this book might have been made into a romance concerning the brilliant reign of Ch'ien-lung, but I have preferred to keep to the solid ground of truth. The historic events connected with Jehol have been built up from western sources, and from Chinese documents, scarcely any of which have ever before been translated into western languages. In chapters IX-XII fantasy has a place, and there we are principally indebted to modern Chinese authors.

I have read Dr. Hedin's book with a very keen personal interest, because I know intimately the places and buildings which he describes. His story of the journey to Jehol in the first chapter is charmingly written and brought back a rush of memories. The road to the City of Emperors winds its way through some of the most beautiful scenery of North China. Dr. Hedin has caught the spirit of the country, and one might almost feel that he were living in the past, even when he bumps his way across the stones and ruts of this ancient highway.

No one can know Dr. Hedin without feeling that he has the rare gift of sympathy for the people with whom he comes in contact and a vivid imagination and esthetic appreciation of their surroundings. In "Jehol—City of Emperors," one will not find a prosaic statement of facts. The whole narrative is tinged with the romance and splendor of the past. Although Hedin's writings on geographical subjects have been my textbooks of exploration, this is of a totally different type. He has wisely refrained from a tiresome guidebook description of the many temples at Jehol. Instead he has limited himself to kaleidoscopic pictures of several temples which are sufficient for them all. He has then recreated for the reader the historical events which were directly connected with these temples.

He tells the history of the flight of the Torgot from Russia and their return to China. He pictures the visit of the Tashi Lama and draws upon his intimate knowledge of Central Asia to reconstruct for the reader a picture of the great funeral cortège, starting on its long journey across Asia. He tells of K'ang-hsi, the great Manchu Emperor, founder of the summer palace at Jehol, and gives an interesting picture of the Emperor through his decrees and daily life.

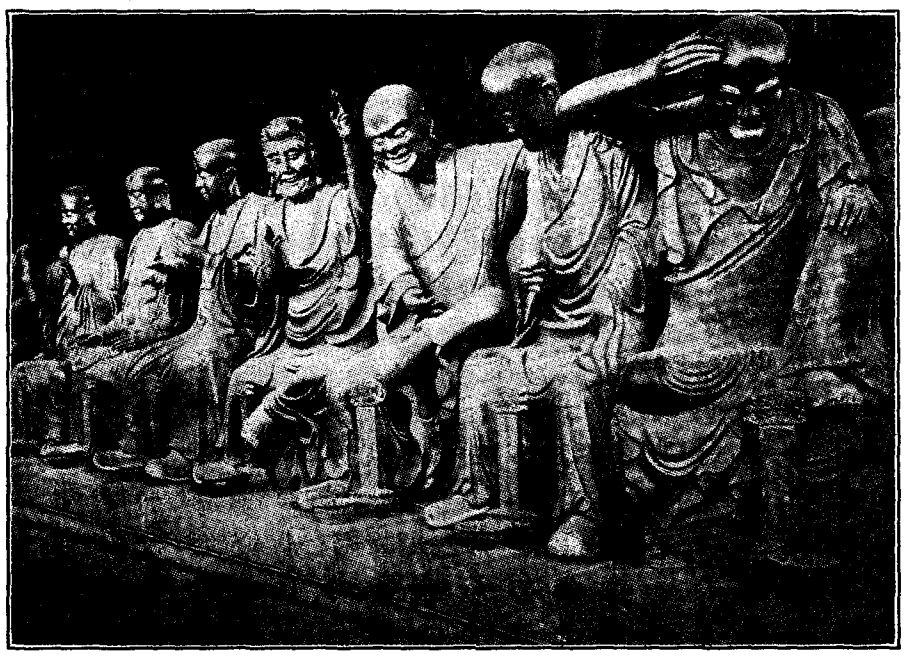
The sixty-year reign of K'ang-hsi's grandson, the Emperor Ch'ien-lung, was the last glorious period in the annals of China. The Empire flourished as seldom before and arts and crafts of every description found a place in the Emperor's favor. The story of his reign, as Sven Hedin tells it, and of the life of the court is one of the most interesting chapters of the book.

It is almost incredible that only seven years ago a Chinese general, stationed with his troops at Tung Ling, the burial place of the Manchu emperors, should have looted the tomb of this famous Emperor. With that of the Empress Dowager, his coffin was broken open in the search for jewels and the bones of these great personages of history thrown to the four winds of Heaven. I had thought that even a Chinese soldier would have had enough veneration for those who had made China great to have respected their last resting places. Hedin tells the fate of many of the greatest works of art in China in a sentence, when speaking of the Potala of Jehol. He says: "No one offers them a farthing towards the upkeep of China's most glorious and monumental relic of antiquity. In ten or twenty years it will be nothing but a mass of ruins." It is a sad story and indicates most strikingly how far modern China has departed from the ways of its ancestors.

"Jehol—City of Emperors" is altogether a delightful book. I commend it to every reader, whether or no he is particularly interested in China. The sympathetic imagination with which Hedin has painted a picture of the past in its relation to this great summer resort of the Manchu dynasty cannot fail to charm every intelligent reader.

The volume is illustrated by sixty-two well-chosen plates which show details of the temples better than could have been done in words.

Roy Chapman Andrews is chief of the division of Asiatic exploration and research of the American Museum of Natural History. He explored in the Gobi Desert, and was the discoverer of some of the richest fossil fields in the world as well as of the dinosaur eggs.



DISCIPLES OF BUDDHA—A TEMPLE DECORATION.

Esthetic Japan

ART, LIFE AND NATURE IN JAPAN. By MASAHARU ANESAKI. Boston: Marshall Jones Company. 1933. $3.50.

Reviewed by KENNETH SAUNDERS

THE Japan Society of America is to be congratulated on putting out this charming volume in commemoration of its twenty-fifth anniversary. No one has done more than Dr. Anesaki to further the ends for which the society exists, and the present volume is a welcome successor to his well-known books on Buddhist art and on the development of religious life in Japan. Based upon a series of lectures given at the Fogg Art Museum of Harvard these chapters are an excellent example of popularization, and the numerous illustrations are happily chosen and beautifully reproduced. They deal with the Japanese love of nature, and of art in the home and garden, and trace the relations of Japanese arts and religion to those of China and Korea, and their naturalization on Japanese soil.

Dr. Anesaki touches upon the successive waves of continental influence from the Wei dynasty in the fourth and fifth centuries to that of the Tang from the seventh to the tenth and that of the early Sung in the twelfth; he reveals the processes of naturalization of art and religion on Japanese soil, and his mastery in the field of religious thought has enabled him to relate these art movements to those of religion in a way which makes the book of special value. He indicates the influence of religion and art first upon nobles and warriors, and then upon the bourgeosie, emphasizing the increasing influence of the middle classes. He traces the repressive influence of sumptuary laws which drove the love of luxury and of splendor to hide itself, but could not exterminate it; and indicates the processes by which every utensil of the household and every decoration of sword and armor becomes a work of art.

Nor does he make the mistake of some writers of the classical school in Japan of undervaluing the *Ukiyo-ye* or "floating world pictures" of the common people. He rightly sees in the wood blocks the "last flare of brilliance," and notes their importance as representing the life and temperament of the common people, and their struggle for freedom and for democratic institutions.

But Buddhism lasted a thousand years, and Buddhist temples and feudal palaces stood out in high relief. We see Buddhism at work refining and taming the warriors of the Middle Ages even while it is being adapted by them to become a technique for this world, and losing its other-worldly emphasis. As the Japanese developed the art of the mainland to express their own ideals so they adapted both Buddhism and Confucianism to their needs. All this is well brought out, and we read of "the romance of aristocratic life and splendid vision of heavenly bliss, the humor and realism of daily life, conflagrations, miracles of healing, pilgrimages, famines, sermons and assemblies, marches and battles—all represented in panoramic succession," on the magnificent scrolls of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, which are a kind of Japanese epic, and peculiarly characteristic of this age of warring clans and romantic adventures.

This age, followed the Heian Era in which women novelists began the long series of romances which depict so realistically the intrigues of the court,—an age of "peace and tranquillity," but also of effeminacy; and with the fall of the Fujiwara manhood awoke. "The civil wars were a fearful shock to the elegant and languid life of the court. The dreams of lovers were harshly broken by the cries of war, the cloud gallants ran to and fro in panic, and fire destroyed many palaces and temples. Terror stirred the minds of the people deeply." All this can be studied not only in such novel as the "Heiji Monogatari," but in the splendid scroll illustrating it now in the Boston [illegible] Fine Arts. They are a vivid [illegible] o the *Genji Monogatari* which [illegible] them.

We read too of the revi[illegible]lhism which came with the downfall of the Fujiwara, and of the biographies of saints which provided popular material for the artists of this era. How Japan was saved from "decadent sentimentalism" by the coming of Zen Buddhism we read in another interesting chapter.

Mr. Anesaki's book is not only very well illustrated, but admirably printed and bound.

Wrapped in Cellophane

(*Continued from page* 409)

is reduced to standard units in order that it may be spread; but if these processes grow too mechanical, as certainly has been the case with us, localism and individualism can be counted upon to reassert themselves. It is very probable that appreciation of the arts and a conception of the necessary relations between economics and government in a modern state (two requisites of a sound culture in a machine age) must be spread by the same methods of efficient standardization. If so, the tooth-paste-cigarette-gadget propaganda for civilization had to be discredited. The native American wants to be himself for a while. Then perhaps he can be sold something that does not come wrapped in cellophane.

More Gilberteana

LOST BAB BALLADS. By W. S. GILBERT. Collected, edited, and illustrated by TOWNLEY SEARLE. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1932. $2.

Reviewed by WALTER TELLER

THE lost "Bab Ballads" are here regained—though in the proper sense they were never lost at all. Like their more familiar brethren they first appeared in several humorous weeklies, but when Gilbert made his one volume collection certain of the ballads were omitted, for he felt that "the public have enough already." But hungry generations have cried for more, and Mr. Searle has answered with a volume of attractive format containing a comprehensive collection of the "lost" ballads. To be sure, some of the uncollected verses have been reprinted heretofore, but never in so accessible a form. Mr. Searle, as editor and illustrator, has stamped the book with his own personality; his pen-and-ink drawings follow the Gilbertian manner. One could wish he had also included Bab's froglike creatures of fancy.

Though we must continue to look to the first collection for those masterpieces of commonsense nonsense like "The Yarn of the Nancy Bell," "Captain Reece," "The Bishop of Rum-ti-foo," and others, this second volume reveals the hand of the master on every page. Here are the favorite subjects of Gilbert's satire, curates and colonels, snobs and swells, babies and barons; and here is that genius for rhyme, that holy lunacy, that outrageous inconsistency, that impossible abruptness, that logical absurdity, which make the "Bab Ballads" one of the great—mayhap one of the most enduring—monuments of Victorian literature.

Mr. St. John Ervine has become Professor of Dramatic Literature of the Royal Society of Literature in succession to Mr. Harley Granville-Barker, who has retired.

The Saturday Review
of LITERATURE

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Published weekly by The Saturday Review Co., Inc., 25 W. 45th St., New York, N. Y. Noble A. Cathcart, President and Treasurer; Henry Seidel Canby, Vice-President and Chairman; Amy Loveman, Secretary.

Subscription rates per year, postpaid in the U. S. and Pan-American Postal Union, $3.50; in Canada, $5; in Great Britain, 18 shillings; elsewhere $4.50. Entered as second class matter at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 1, 1879. Vol. 9. No. 29.

THE SATURDAY REVIEW is indexed in the "Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature."

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Boswell to a Dictator

TALKS WITH MUSSOLINI. By EMIL LUDWIG. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1933. $2.75.

Reviewed by LEONARD BACON

THE attempt to reveal a great contemporary personality is bound to be hard work. Herr Ludwig has done his elaborate best with Benito Mussolini, and it would be foolish to deny that he has given us an entertaining book. It is disarmingly written and, furthermore, full of shrewd aperçus, not all of which are due to the startling and exciting creature whose life and ideas form the subject matter. In fact Herr Ludwig has made a very great deal of a very special opportunity.

For two weeks last year, as he tells us in his introduction, Herr Ludwig met the dictator daily for an hour at the Palazzo Venezia. He was at complete liberty to raise any topic he pleased and he appears to have done so without abusing the privilege. Certainly Herr Ludwig deserves the greatest credit for tact. He evidently played Boswell or Ekermann well indeed.

He has naturally systematized the conversations which took place under such auspicious circumstances. The book is divided into five parts, of which the first is concerned with the training of a dictator. The interviewer draws from his subject his opinions as to the parts played in his development by poverty, by experience as a journalist and soldier, and by his study of history. The second section deals with the changes in Mussolini's thought caused by the altering necessities of the times, by the drift from the burning socialism of 1911 to the burning nationalism of 1915, and by promotion to responsibility. The third and fourth parts take up various problems of power such as the management of men, the control of the crowd, and the dangers of dictatorship, and, furthermore, various regions where that power may properly be exercised. And the concluding division is an *omnium gatherum* where the dictator's views and tastes are displayed with some remarks on his role and destiny.

In so far as the book is Boswellian it seems to me very good indeed. But when Herr Ludwig endeavors to go behind the record so as to account for the man, he gets into waters that are hard to navigate. He says quite properly that he has tried to view Mussolini as a discreet phenomenon. But the discreet phenomenon turns out to be our old friend the Nietzschean Hero not unimpregnated with Goethe and bearing a strong physical resemblance to Bartolomeo Colleone. The exigencies of a colorful presentation demand that the superman with the will to power must call for more light from the back of Verocchio's fat horse. I do not believe in this synthesis.

For if Mussolini had never read a word of Nietzsche he would be what he is. And if he had never heard of Colleone, the mercenary builder of a vast private fortune, he would still be unlike him. The son of the blacksmith is another guess creature. He was a socialist in the beginning and he is a socialist now. As he himself says, though he has come to an unexpected street, he is the same traveler. And he is a socialist who does not forget the sufferings of the chocolate-maker of Orbe, of the stone-mason of Zürich, of the revolutionary who read in one prison what Cervantes had written in another. Fundamentally he is concerned with the immediate problem of feeding a nation, which he hopes subsequently to train into socialism. In all this I see precious little Nietzsche and still less Colleone. Rather we have the apotheosis, and a fiery one, of the Italian peasant who has come in contact with the misery of manufacturing towns.

I think this explains him. It explains the combination of conservative prejudices, socialistic theories, and talent for the practical. It throws light on the paradox of his fury against birth control and his tendency to think in terms of things rather than in terms of propositions. It clears up his almost unintelligent attitude toward women. And finally it reveals why so many Italians feel, when he speaks, that their innermost thought has found expression. He has put it clearly himself: "I am of the people. That gave me all the trumps." Peasant canniness, transmuted and elevated into genius, a hard boyhood in the Romagna, and superlative courage are quite enough to account for the phenomenon of Benito Mussolini. I see no reason for Herr Ludwig's recourse to a professor who lived dangerously at Basle, or to a mercenary soldier who lived safely at Venice.

After which stricture it is proper to return to the more convincing aspects of the work. It is a pleasure to follow Herr Ludwig at his task of developing his hero's actual traits. He gets him to roar now like a lion, now as gently as a sucking dove. He makes clear what every sensible observer has always believed that Mussolini is a genuine friend of peace. With patient skill he elicits opinions that light up now whole areas of thought, now engaging anfractuosities of the speaker's mind. It is pleasant to hear a despot exclaim: "Every anarchist is a dictator who has missed fire." Or again: "I think there will not be a second Duce." And one sympathizes with the crowd-compeller whose attitude toward the crowd he compels is ninety-eight per cent. pity and two per cent. irony, even if he has to tell them that nothing is impossible, because otherwise they will believe that everything is. And beyond sympathy comes admiration for a man of action capable of saying: "In the absence of symbolism, life would be a casual matter, undifferentiated."

A curious feature of the book is the light it throws on the dictator's literary interests. Mussolini quotes, approves, or occasionally condemns Zola, Byron, Leopardi, Sorel, Heracleitus, Lassalle, Renan, Balzac, Beccaria, Dante, Schiller, Goethe, Nietzsche, Gobineau, Weininger, Houston Chamberlain, Shakespeare, Kipling, Cervantes, Macchiavelli, Mazzini, Hegel, Marx, Klopstock, Gomperz, d'Annunzio, Heine, Shaw, Pirandello, Raymond Poincaré, André Siegfried, *and* Emil Ludwig. The list looks a bit *tendenziös* in spots. But so were the conversations. He has doubtless read much beside, but one is moved to inquire a little into the omissions. Where is Darwin? What concession is here to the physical sciences, the only known antidote to political economy? Where, if you must have philosophy, are Plato and Kant? The catalogue seems to the reviewer significant in fifty ways, and a dozen different Mussolinis might be deduced from it and one's inner consciousness after the custom of Germany—whereas there is but one.

That one is enough for the times. And on the whole we had better be grateful. In a mistrustful epoch, even nations whose sympathies are opposed to his theory and practice, ought to recognize valor, audacity, ingenuity, and splendid legitimate self-confidence. They are qualities we cannot afford to despise.

It would be folly to extrapolate the Mussolini curve. Chaos created the dictator, and the dictator may yet create chaos. But no man living is more likely to discover "the middle term between unlimited control and unlimited disorder."

MUSSOLINI WALKING ALONG THE SEASHORE.
Reproduced from "My Autobiography," by Benito Mussolini" (Scribners).

A Romantic Career

BRITISH AGENT. By R. H. BRUCE LOCKHART. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1933. $2.75.

Reviewed by HAROLD NICOLSON

MR. R. H. BRUCE LOCKHART'S "British Agent" is a book in a thousand. It deals with an indigestible subject, namely the origins of the Russian Revolution. It is concerned with an unpalatable thesis, namely the effects of human error. And yet it leaves one with no sense of wastage or depression; it leaves one only with an exhilarating conviction that some sorts of failure are more satisfying than some sorts of success.

To what qualities can be ascribed this triumph over theme and thesis? The story, in the first place, is a romantic story. Mr. Lockhart introduces himself as an athlete with a marked taste for Pierre Loti. While still a schoolboy he is sent to plant rubber in the Malay States. He abducts the daughter of the local Sultan and is thereafter poisoned by her family. Half-unconscious he is carried to the coast and shipped back to Scotland. This romantic prelude furnishes a foretaste of the adventures to come. On entering the British foreign service, Mr. Lockhart is sent as Vice Consul to Moscow. He profits by the opportunity; we soon find him in charge of the Consulate and writing political reports which are taken seriously in high places. Yet in this excellent consular official lurks a vein of recklessness. The strains of gipsy music lure him from the narrow path. They lure him so flagrantly and so frequently that he is "invalided" home. Then comes the Bolshevik revolution. The London Cabinet wish to open some sort of contact with the dictators of Moscow and bethink them again of the gay and enterprising Mr. Lockhart. He is sent back to Russia upon a perilous and ill-defined mission. He realizes at once that the Bolsheviks have the country under their control, and he dissuades the authorities at home from any form of intervention in internal Russian affairs. Had Mr. Lockhart persisted in this excellent advice, he would now be wearing the bay-wreath of successful prophecy entwined with the laurel-wreath of martyrdom. He did not persist. Once again romanticism was his undoing. He had fallen in love with a beautiful Russian lady and he feared that too obstinate an opposition to the desires of his home Government might lead to recall and separation from the object of his adoration.

Mr. Lockhart changed his mind about the Bolsheviks, and went over, though with every reservation, to the side of the interventionists. The Bolsheviks for their part ceased to trust him and began to suspect. He was imprisoned in the Kremlin and was in hourly danger of his life. When at last his release had been negotiated he returned to London broken and discredited. The British Foreign Office can forgive anything in their servants except inconsistency and becoming a nuisance. Mr. Lockhart had proved himself inconsistent and his imprisonment had created a situation of the very greatest inconvenience. He was not forgiven. Such is the romantic but wholly truthful story which he unfolds.

It is not, however, solely as a narrative of adventure that this book merits the success which it has already achieved in England and which it is certain to secure in the United States. It is as a frank study of human personality that "British Agent" exercises so compelling a fascination. The strange duality of Mr. Lockhart's character,—his Scotch canniness and his almost French amativeness, his ambition and his recklessness, his caution and his excess—all these are conveyed in a semi-humorous mood of self-depreciation. Mr. Lockhart did, in fact, play a highly important part at a very vital stage of the world's history. Yet he himself is more interested in his own defeats than in his own triumphs. He possesses the temperament of an artist,—he is able, that is, to regard his own personality from a wholly detached angle. The result is a rare combination of intense personal experience and detached impersonal observation. It is as if Sterne had been involved in the French Terror and left us a record of his dealings with Danton, Robespierre, and the rest.

Mr. Lockhart is gifted, moreover, with a quality rare in any autobiographer. He actually desires to tell the truth. This attempt on his part may strike the more sensitive reader as an error of taste. Yet in fact Mr. Lockhart steers skilfully between outspokenness and shamelessness. The affectionate disapproval with which he regards the follies of his own youth may at times become more affectionate than disapproving. Yet he has written a cautionary, if not a very moral, tale.

Finally there is the element of charm. Not only the ready charm which lives in his gay humanity, in his undefeated zest in life, but that more durable charm which is conveyed by the sunshine and shadow of his April story, by the astounding friendliness which sparkles on every page. It is this unembittered humanity, illuminating a narrative of fear and squalor, which renders "British Agent" so exhilarating and unforgettable a book.

Harold Nicolson, who is at present in this country with his wife, V. Sackville-West, is a diplomat as well as author, being Counsellor in the British Diplomatic Service. He is known to this country as the author of volumes on Tennyson, Byron, and Swinburne, of the delightful biography of his father, "Portrait of a Diplomatist," and of "Some People." His novel, "Public Faces," has just been issued.

An original copy of William Blake's "Songs of Innocence," with color plates, one of which is the only example in the world, has been presented to the British Museum.

The Saturday Review Recommends

This Group of Current Books:

THE YEARS OF THE LOCUST. By GILBERT SELDES. *Little, Brown.*
A vivid discussion of the years of the depression and the state of mind which produced it.

ONE MORE SPRING. By ROBERT NATHAN. *Knopf.*
A delicate and fantastic novel built about the existence of the depression.

BRITISH AGENT. By BRUCE LOCKHART. *Putnam.*
The chronicle of a romantic career in the British Foreign Service.

This Less Recent Book:

KAMONGO. By HOMER W. SMITH. *Viking.*
"A new reading of the story of Evolution," strung on a thread of fiction.

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A Home in the Park

ONE MORE SPRING. By ROBERT NATHAN. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1933. $2.

Reviewed by HERSCHEL BRICKELL

THIS is the tenth of Mr. Nathan's highly individual prose works, in which he blends fable and satire with almost unerring skill. From the beginning his short novels, running to a curious uniformity in length, as if his mind had created a mould into which what he has to say at any given time can be poured without overflowing, have provoked the unstinted encomia of critics and reviewers, and indeed, so much has been said of his work that it is difficult not to repeat, particularly in writing about a book that has the same quality and the same merits as its predecessors.

For here once more we find the brooding tenderness, the irony tinged with melancholy, the humor that provokes a quiet smile, that are to be found in the other novels, all the result of the impact of a hard world upon a sensitive and poetical mind. And here, too, the fantasy, the whole thing caught in prose so simple one wonders at its consistent effectiveness, prose so clearly beautiful that passages of it live in the mind for months after being read. Probably at least a part of the charm of the prose is a part of the charm of the books themselves; it is that the author still believes in magic. This may be his secret, explaining why the people who like his books find in them the deepest pleasure, and the people who do not, cannot read them at all.

Followers of Mr. Nathan's work know that of late his books have had a tendency to be more or less closely related to actual happenings in the world, and so it will not be a surprise that "One More Spring" has to do with the Depression, and more particularly, with its effect upon the lives of a small group of people, who would never have become a group without it. The story opens with the failure in business of Jared Otkar, dealer in antiques, who "had been willing, honest, and industrious all his life. But like everybody else, he had expected too much of these virtues." After his stock has been sold at auction, he finds himself left with a large bed, adorned with cupids and flowers, a bottle of milk, an egg, some bread, and an alcohol stove. He is seated on the bed in his empty shop when in walks Morris Rosenberg, concert violinist, who has nothing left except his fiddle, and an overcoat with a fur collar, the musician's symbol of success.

Otkar sees that the violinist is worse off even than himself, and gives him the available food. Then he suggests that they join forces, with the bed as their principal asset. Otkar, who has had a longing for the country for some time—it is Autumn, and the weather is lovely—suggests that they move to Central Park, which, after borrowing a pushcart, they do. Their first night is spent al fresco, and signalized by Otkar's first criminal act, the capture and devouring of a fat, tough, Park pigeon. The next day Rosenberg has the good fortune to fall in with a streetcleaner named Sweeney, who has an ambition to be a fiddler, and who agrees to let the bed be moved into a toolshed in return for violin lessons. Otkar and Rosenberg move in. Before long Otkar brings in a homeless prostitute, who finds a place in the large bed, and sets out to take care of the two men. Not long afterward a banker, whose bank has closed, is pulled from the lake by Otkar, and joins the household. In the background all this time, is Mary Sweeny, the wife of the would-be fiddler, a simple Irish soul, who runs an elevator in the office building where the banker's bank is situated; her savings are there, too, because she liked to be near enough to keep an eye on them.

In time, when Spring is near, it falls out that Otkar discovers the true state of his feelings for Elizabeth, the prostitute, and when things take a turn for the better through the reopening of the banker's bank, the two set off South; they will starve before long, Mr. Nathan explains, but for the time are as happy as any young lovers. Mrs. Sweeny will get at least a part of her savings, the banker has promised to give Rosenberg a chance at a concert as soon as he can be sure there is a profit in it, and the famous bed, completely done over, of course, is in the possession of the banker.

One thing Mr. Nathan means to say in this book is that people must have faiths; once "In the midst of the most dreadful disasters, they had perished happily for the sake of God, for the East India Company, science, the divine right of kings, or the dawn of democracy. Now they were obliged to die for no other reason than starvation." He sums up Otkar's predicament after his failure in business thus: "What he wanted was something to believe in. At the same time, he was obliged to consider where and how he was to live," an extraordinary summing up of the plight of a shockingly large percentage of the world's population today, especially in the Western world. Mary Sweeny had faith in her church; Rosenberg in his fiddle; Sweeny in the Streetcleaners' Union and Tammany. Elizabeth, the prostitute, had love, a kind of faith, and Otkar, an affectionate understanding of his fellowman, which will also do as a substitute.

It will be readily seen by those who are familiar with Mr. Nathan's books that this group of characters in the setting of a Central Park toolshed, not far from the barnyard of the Zoo, where eggs may be stolen, and even on occasion, a live pig, gives him excellent opportunities for the exercise of his talents. The Casino is not far away from the Otkar homestead; Mr. Nathan has the ex-antique dealer look at it and reflect that in any European nation it would be something like a pleasant beer garden, where the poor might drink a little, listen to good music, and even dance, while here it is a restaurant for the very rich in the middle of a park that is supposed to be for the pleasure of all. Several sermons about our democracy might be preached from this text. . . .

It may seem captious to point out certain defects in a novel capable of giving those who like it so much pleasure, but "One More Spring" has its faults. At times it goes saccharine; the author misses by a shade the proper blending of the sweetness of sentiment and the acid of irony. The characters, too, are, with the exception of Rosenberg, no more than sketched, and Otkar talks very much like Mr. Nathan at times, a delightful enough way to talk, to be sure, but not exactly in character. There are some passages that a little too closely resemble passages in "The Orchid," its immediate predecessor, to which the whole novel bears a very close similarity. And life in the toolshed is not described with sufficient detail to make it seem real, even with the bounds of a fantastic concept.

When all this has been said, the fact remains that the book contains the possibilities of a delightful two hours for many more readers than have discovered Mr. Nathan's work up to the present moment.

According to the *Manchester Guardian*, it has been proposed to expel George Bernard Shaw from the membership of the County Wexford Bee-Keepers' Association because of his attitude towards religion expressed in "The Black Girl."

FORM OF BEQUEST

I give and bequeath unto Henry Louis Mencken, alias H. L. Mencken,

a citizen of Baltimore in the Maryland Free State, the sum of.....

..... *dollars,*

of the present standard of weight and fineness, and free of all inheritance taxes and other imposts, whether inflicted by the United States or by any State or Territory thereof, in testimony of my appreciation of his altruistic and unrelenting services to his country as patriot and Christian, in consideration of his probable bodily and spiritual needs in his declining years, and for value received.

Passed as to legality by Messrs. Goldfarb, Feinberg, Spritzwasser, and O'Shaunnessy.

The Bureau of Prohibition holds that wines and liquors may be devised by will only to "the widow, children or other relations residing in the dwelling of the deceased owner at the time of his death." But this inhuman restriction, of course, will be null and void when the Volstead Act is repealed.

(This card was sent out to his friends by H. L. Mencken.)

Echo of Living

THE BRIDGE. By NAOMI ROYDE-SMITH. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1933. $2.50.

Reviewed by GEORGE DANGERFIELD

THIS novel will scarcely bear comparison with "The Tortoiseshell Cat" or "The Delicate Situation": as a matter of honest fact, it is probably the most unimportant book that Miss Royde-Smith has ever written—and I say this with sorrow, for she is one of my favorite novelists. None the less, once you have started "The Bridge" you will

NAOMI ROYDE-SMITH.

find a certain innocent magic in its pages, against which the most pointed weapons of criticism are not sharp enough to prevail. Miss Royde-Smith's prose must be the despair of some of her contemporaries, for it does so much more than it should be allowed to do. "The Bridge," for instance, is little more at the start than a fanciful essay on country manners, little more at the middle than an animated travelogue, little more at the end than a faint echo of passion. Its early characters are a sort of languid shadows, drifting from their creator's brain; its later characters, decorative and unlikely, too seldom surprise one by coming alive. But there is an ingenuous beauty in the writing which seems to absolve the story of all these faults. To praise other novelists merely for their prose is to condemn them: but not Miss Royde-Smith. She was born under a lucky star; even when she yawns in our face, and the opening of "The Bridge" is little more than a yawn, we find it a candid and engaging trait in her.

And so, when you read the story of Andra Willmore who married the Reverend Everard Pontifex in the sleepy little town of Fletten's Ambo, you will probably like it. Andra was the clergyman's second wife, and only a girl: after her child was born dead she settled down, uncomplaining, to the life of a married nun. Year after year went by in a mild and trivial routine, until she accepted an invitation to stay with her married stepson in the South of France.

She went alone. That was the beginning for her—a new sense of independence. And because she had an approving mind, the life at her stepson's villa surprised but never disgusted her. She was merely aware for the first time of new colors and new passions in life: she knew what it might feel like to be physically in love with a man. And when she left for home, travelling slowly by way of Avignon, she fell in with a French officer, lately returned from North Africa. There was a lifetime's need in Andra which responded to some desolation in him—before she left for England she had been his lover for three days. Because in those days she discovered herself at last, she was fortunate: because she would find nothing to take their place in the empty years ahead, she was never to be happy again.

Here are the bare bones of the story; not very original bones and not too neatly put together. Nor are they fleshed with anything more substantial than Miss Royde-Smith's charm—her curiously deft conjuring with the minor detail and the insignificant event. You cannot analyze this charm and you cannot escape from it. It makes "The Bridge" what "The Bridge" was no doubt intended to be—a very pleasant evening's reading. And to those who like that kind of evening it is most sincerely recommended.

L'Aiglon

THE KING OF ROME, NAPOLEON II. By OCTAVE AUBRY. Translated by ELISABETH ABBOTT. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co. 1932. $3.50.

Reviewed by H. L. PANGBORN

TO make a book of 273 pages of the life of a boy who died in his twenty-first year, it is obviously necessary to spread the facts rather thinly, but M. Aubry has accomplished the task with deftness, holding the reader's interest throughout. It is, of course, more a story of some phases of the greater Napoleon himself, and of the Austrian court under the dominance of Metternich, than of the unhappy "King of Rome." There remains, however, the pathose, even the tragedy of that "Eaglet," who is recorded to have said, on his deathbed: "Must I end so young a life that is useless and without a name? My birth and my death—that is my whole story." It was; but M. Aubry has made the most of it, and the portrait that emerges is far solider and more convincing than the poetic legends which have hitherto served largely in place of history.

"L'Aiglon" has, in fact, been chiefly the creation of the poets, from the ill-advised Barthélemy who wrote the "Son of Man" in 1829, picturing the Duke of Reichstadt as a martyred victim of a criminal plot, down to Rostand who drew him as a hero of romance. M. Aubry paints him as a spirited, lovable, very human child of good intelligence, who, in spite of the kindness of his grandfather, was condemned to a life of isolation and futility but who grew up to be a young man of handsome presence and, possibly, of much promise and ambition. At best he was a romantic "might-have-been." It it undeniable that if he had lived, in good health, and had been able to escape from Metternich's control, the history of France and of Europe might have been different. He seems to have had something of his titanic father in him. But that is all that can be said.

As history the book has a definite value in that it corrects not a few of the legendary errors. It is well documented, and M. Aubry has had access to some hitherto unused material in the Austrian archives of which he has made excellent use, with sufficiently critical scholarship. He has also covered his field exhaustively. His portrayal of the many characters who come in contact with his hero, is on the whole, judicially fair though he deals somewhat harshly with Marie-Louise (who probably deserved his strictures) and he occasionally approaches the rhapsodical in writing of Napoleon. But he has produced a history, not an historical romance: a highly acceptable addition to his already long list of historical studies.

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The Bowling Green

The Folder

SO far as I know, I have never seen a copy of the magazine called *True Story*, but I usually read its full-page advertisements which appear now and then in the newspapers; they are interesting little essays in economics. I was pleased with this passage in *True Story's* advt the other day:—

> The first question the little shop girl always asks her boy friend is, "Are you married?"—knowing very well that if he is, he is no longer a marketable product for matrimony. And he is immediately reduced to the bare possibility of a repossession or a replacement value. The real, original consumer-market is not there.

Whoever writes those ads, spoofing the grim jargon of merchandisers, knows that behind the palaver of economic manifestoes lie the realities of human habit and human need.

⁂ ⁂

The figures of American and British book production in 1932, given recently in *The Publishers' Weekly*, emphasize one consideration. In 1932 there were 7,556 new books published in the U. S., 9,251 in Britain. But the difference is much larger in the matter of new editions of previously published books. In the U. S. there were 1,479 reissues of older books; in Britain, 4,320. In the case of fiction, there were only 604 new editions in the U. S., but in Britain 2,289. British publishers issued more reissues of previous works than new titles.

This reinforces our opinion that British publishers are more persistent than our own to keep their older properties in print.

One valuable phase of the business depression is that it is compelling publishers to devise ways of utilizing the latent wealth which is locked up in their plate-vaults.

⁂ ⁂

We spoke some time ago about the word *monger*, wondering how many kinds of mongers (fish, iron, news, scandal, phrase, etc.) are still in existence. We learn from George Borrow's *The Gypsies of Spain* that *monger* is from the same root as the gypsy word *engro* which seems to mean a fellow, a person concerned with something (the same usage as the Hindoo word *wallah*). In Romany talk, Borrow tells us, Petul-engro means a horseshoe-fellow or blacksmith; lav-engro is a word-fellow, a scholar.

⁂ ⁂

Ever since the days of the Hartford Wits (about whom my memory is very vague) that worthy town has been esteemed for high and independent spirit. So I'm particularly pleased to see that Evelyn Longman Batchelder, whose sculpture has so long been admired by the Bowling Green, has carved a decoration for the façade of Hartford's new post-office. The accompanying inscription is by John Edmund Barss.

Experienced strollers on this Green will remember that the statue of Electricity, above the Telephone Company's building at Broadway and Fulton Streets, was done by Mrs. Batchelder. It was our constant cynosure in the old days on Vesey Street.

⁂ ⁂

Our faithful client F. H. P. desires us to remember that the good old arts of flowery and romantic prose are still being practised a little farther down the map; all these new Southern realists notwithstanding. As evidence, F. H. P. sends an aromatic little news item from *The Shenandoah Valley*, of New Market, Va.:—

> Tossing a dainty kiss at Destiny, the radiant and lovely maiden, Beulah —, became the radiant and lovely bride of Ripley — on Wednesday.
>
> Immediately after the ceremony, the transported couple, squired by Daniel Cupid, that wicked and mischievous God of Love, stepped on the starter of the waiting auto and with hearts beating in soft unison with the purring motor, they began their journey home, there to take up the felicities of wedded bliss, and to hide the thorn of single loneliness in the blossoms of united tenderness and hymeneal forgetfulness.
>
> The bride claims the state of West Virginia, that much beloved Commonwealth on the sunset side of our own classic state, as the place of her nativity. There with the handmaidens of Health and Happiness she grew into womanhood, blessed with many charms and a beauty both of face and mind, lovely as a snow flake flung from a wintry sky.
>
> The groom, as an orchardist and pure bred live stock grower, is known over the entire state, and his courteous suavity has won for him scores of friends, all of whom wish him and his ravishingly beautiful bride, happiness and a long life.
>
> To love or to have loved is sufficient, ask nothing more after that. There is no other pearl to be found in the dark folds of life, for love is a consummation.

⁂ ⁂

"I WANT OUT"

SIR:—I've changed my idea of what Heaven (if any) would be like. Since I was eight it had remained fixed as being half asleep in a warm bed on a rainy Saturday morning. But now it is a second-hand bookshop where I can read all Those delightful Things That I'm afraid I'll never get to:

> *Margaret Ogilvie, Madame Bovary, Jude the Obscure, Giants in the Earth, A Connecticut Yankee, The Forsyte Saga, Anna Karenina, Babbitt, Oil, My Antonia, We, The Castle of Otranto,* something of Joseph Hergesheimer's, *The Red Badge of Courage, Typee,* all of Emerson's *Essays, The Conquest of Mexico,* Boswell's *Johnson, The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table* and others.

Why, I don't even know yet the names of books I'm dying to read. I've had the merest taste. I still read the continued pieces in the newspapers. *Sandra* by Vida Hurst is the current one.

But I teach English in high school. Oh, yes.

You said in the person of Roger Mifflin that you'd always thought you'd like to teach school. Well, you wouldn't. I thought so, too; merely because I liked to read.

What a laugh. Would you like to grade papers? No, you would not. How would you like to *steal* every time you picked up something other than *The Highway to English, Book One* by Starne, Clark, and New? But I steal. I steal, and steal, and steal, and like it. I sit up in study hall right before my little masters and read *The Conquest of Mexico, The Americanization of Edward Bok, Main Street,* Franklin's *Autobiography, Walden,* and *Self-Reliance.*

Please, will you do this for me? Tell me what literature is. To my shame I cannot make my classes understand why *Huckleberry Finn* is and *The Riding of the Purple Saga* is not. They couldn't understand anything I could tell them, because I always identify anything as literature that makes me clamp my teeth together in a certain way. Of course, I know what Wordworth said about "the passionate few" but that's as incomprehensible to my wretched, unfortunate, stubborn, argumentative, darling devils as gritting one's teeth.

Oh, teaching is fine in the abstract, but it's hard to sustain a detached attitude. I was ugly when the class didn't like Emerson, but hell broke loose when they slurred at Irving.

I want out of this. I don't like to do anything but read. Swim a little. Ride horseback a little. Get drunk a little. I wouldn't mind waiting on customers because interruptions make reading twice delightful.

When this term is over, my sister (also a briary-bushie) and I should have $300 saved up. What can we do with this toward stepping up from Hades? Can we make it to Heaven in a single bound? Do you know of anything we could do with $300 that would enable us to work in a bookshop at $100 per month together? (i.e. $50 a month apiece) Do you? Do you?

Sincerely yours,
MEG MERRILEES.

Maybe you'll like to know that I've succeeded in teaching my classes one thing at least (although I wasted 45 minutes of class time doing it). If I ask them, "Is war right? Is it sensible? Is it civilized?" They all shout, "No!" M. M.

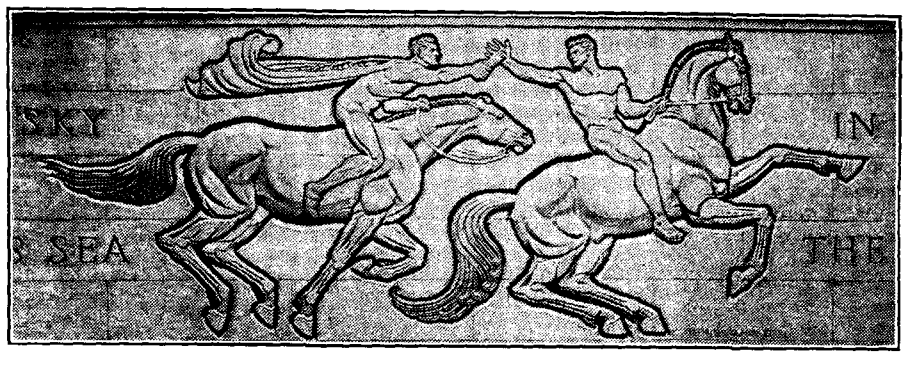
⁂ ⁂

In the Bowling Green's patient self-education in matters of pictorial art, the exciting series of monographs issued by the Whitney Museum have considerable influence. There are now over 20 titles in the series (Studio Publications, $2 each), remarkable not only for the excellent reproductions but also for crisp and vigorous prefaces by strong hands. One of the latest additions is the volume devoted to Mary Cassatt, of whom we heard much in a boyhood in Philadelphia suburbs. Miss Cassatt (1845-1926) horrified her parents when, about 1868, she decided to go to Europe to study painting. Her father, a banker, said, "I would almost rather see you dead."

When Degas first saw her work some years later he said, "Je n'admets pas qu'une femme puisse dessiner comme ça."

Forbes Watson in his sympathetic essay introducing the little volume tells how her last years were embittered by increasing blindness, which she refused to acknowledge. He speaks of a visit to her in Paris in 1920:—

> We went into the dining-room to have tea. Sitting side by side at the big table the maid served us and placed between us a large compote of strawberry jam. Miss Cassatt said: "If there is any jam on the table, help yourself." I looked at her startled and then knew for the first time that she was blind.
>
> She had the air not of the sister of the president of the Pennsylvania Railroad, not of an old lady born to wealth, but, except for the hands, of a lean, bent, over-worked Puritan housekeeper gone blind in her old age after incessant domestic drudgery.
>
> Everyone who knew her remembers her inherent ferocity, her uncompromising love of art, her hatred for shirkers and dodgers, her complete lack of any of the distractions, and her apparently complete freedom from any of the so-called entanglements of love.



DECORATION FOR FAÇADE, NEW POST OFFICE, HARTFORD, CONN.
BY EVELYN LONGMAN BATCHELDER.

The Crime Club well merits congratulations for its recent choice of shockers—such as Francis Iles's *Before the Fact* and Mignon Eberhart's *The White Cockatoo.* The latter we did not read at once, fearing there might be a trained nurse in it; we are rather fed up with trained nurses in detective stories. We can now report that it conveys an excellent sense of horror in a chilly mistral-plagued and almost empty hotel in the South of France. The story is told by an American engineer, who describes himself as "rather impersonal about women." But surely the feminine hand of his talented creator shows in the engineer's rather remarkable knowledge of dressmaking and fabrics? How many engineers would know what is a basque (as a garment), or chenille?

⁂ ⁂

A scholarly but pessimistic bookseller remarked to us the other day, "The book business began in a churchyard, round about old St. Paul's in London; and it seems to be rapidly returning toward the cemetery."

⁂ ⁂

But, we often think, what a tremendous business there is nowadays for the people who letter those signs on windows, THIS STORE FOR RENT.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

Aunt Abigail

By MARY ROBERTS BERRY

AUNT ABIGAIL, being old and
v

With thre
vised;
The family only knew that she was there.
Her flame of life burned flickeringly bright
On meager stores to warm a chilly heart;
Fearful of zero weather in the night,
Her transient soul kept ready to depart.
From a screen of fern she watched the people go
Along the street, would nod or call to one,
And lift her withered fingers up to sew,
Or warm her stiffened muscles in the sun.

As if to pay for the solicitude
Accorded her in jell or paisley shawl,
Or sassafras the way she liked it brewed,
She labored making nightcaps for them all,—
Elaborate with monogram and frill,
Each thoughtfully designed for special need—
A flannel lining placed to keep the chill
From Uncle Simon's broad bald head. Indeed,
They say she knit one earless for Delight,
A timid aunt, who slept with ears a-cock
To hear some wily burglar in the night
Juggling his keys to pick the kitchen lock.
She made a pink silk quilted one for Kate,
Whose love of beauty covered many sins—
Flared and ample to accommodate
A multitude of wire curling pins.
The relatives and friends revered each stitch
In annual grief, "She will not be here long,"
While marvelling at the careful sureness which
Her fingers had, that were so gnarled and strong.
They thought the nightcaps wrought by Abigail
Too painfully stitched up for common wear,
And every cap *reverted without fail*
To pungent lavender and silent care.

And finally, when Aunt was ninety-four,
And died—by alien hands was laid to rest—
A stranger found a leaky attic floor,
And a hundred yellowed nightcaps in a chest.

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By the author of
LADY INTO FOX

David Garnett's

POCAHONTAS

The story of Pocahontas, in this longest and most ambitious novel yet written by Mr. Garnett, runs like a brightly colored thread through his re-creation of the Virginia of Captain John Smith, of the glittering London of James I, Raleigh and Ben Jonson. The romantic figure of the American Princess who lived the last of her short life in England as Mrs. Thomas Rolfe, provides exactly the material best suited to Mr. Garnett's undoubted genius.

"This true and lovely book." —*Times Literary Supplement*, London.

Just out, $2.50

By the author of
UNDER SAIL

Felix Riesenberg's

LOG OF THE SEA

Ten years in the making, fifty years in the living, this is Mr. Riesenberg's votive offering to the sea-gods, his log-book filled with tales of ceaseless wandering and adventure. Master mariner in sail and steam, he has written a racy, salty book for those who know the sea and those who hope to know it.

Just out, $3.00

HARCOURT, BRACE & COMPANY
383 MADISON AVE., N. Y.

HAROLD NICOLSON

"has written the best satire on world diplomacy we have ever read."—*Chicago News*. "Filled with wit, nose-thumbing, high jinx and the comic imbecilities of Foreign Offices."—*Herald Tribune*.

PUBLIC FACES

$2.50 H. M. Co.

JANET AYER FAIRBANK

"has written a perfect novel—far and away her best."—*Chicago News*. "Each character fairly springs to life."—*Samuel Hopkins Adams*. "Substantial as a Thanksgiving dinner."—*Isabel Paterson*.

THE BRIGHT LAND

$2.50 H. M. Co.

Round about Parnassus

By WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

ON MASEFIELD

THE shelf seems to have filled up again, but there are few important volumes. There is the *Recent Prose* of the Poet Laureate, John Masefield, together with a study of him by Gilbert Thomas, both books being from Macmillan. The prose is a sort of scrapbook of various things. The best piece in it by far, "The Taking of Helen," formerly appeared in a volume entitled *The Taking of Helen and Other Prose Selections*. The next best paper, "Fox-Hunting," appeared in the same former volume. Of what is new, Masefield's remarks in respect to Shakespeare and Yeats are worth reading, beside the "Chaucer," which has been printed before. But these talks are composed for occasions. And, as I already possess "The Taking of Helen," this new volume seems to have little excuse. There is not enough new matter in it to warrant a new book. "The Taking" is a vivid and memorable piece of prose. To my mind it is better than anything else Masefield has written concerning Helen of Troy,—fresh, individual, and bold. Mr. Thomas's book on the poet seems to me only so-so. It lacks critical salience. Nevertheless, it is a good emotional introduction to Masefield for those who are but just beginning to read him.

FOR SCHOLARS

Among books for the scholar's study are *The Songs of John Dryden*, edited by Cyrus Lawrence Day and printed at the Harvard University Press. Here are all Dryden's songs for the first time brought together in a single volume. There are facsimiles of twenty-five of the original airs, from rare songbooks or manuscripts in the British Museum. Most of the Restoration lyricists wrote their songs to be sung to music. A good deal of information concerning Restoration songs is to be found in the notes. Dryden's songs were graceful, but the interest of the book is, in the main, that of a curiosity of literature. That famous fourteenth century English poem, *The Pearl*, has been rendered into modern verse and is printed, with an introduction by Stanley Perkins Chase, by the Oxford University Press. This beautiful little book will prove a valuable acquisition to students of early English poetry. The author of "The Pearl" was theologian as well as mystic. Which brings me, by a natural transition, to comment upon another Macmillan book, *Franciscan Poets*, written by Benjamin F. Musser, Tertiary of Saint Francis. Mr. Musser is not only a poet himself but long a student of Franciscana. The author thoroughly understands the friar-poets. The seventeen papers that make up the book originally appeared in the *Franciscan*, a Catholic monthly review. The second paper is devoted to that poet in our own time who, next to his master, Coventry Patmore (who also receives a chapter), best illustrates the Franciscan type, namely Francis Thompson. America has had her own poet-priest in the person of Father Ryan, Abram J .Ryan of the South. Mr. Musser's other choices are Dunbar of Scotland. Jacopone da Todi, Thomas More, certain poets of Spain and Portugal, Petrarch and Michelangelo, St. Antony of Padua, Dante Alighieri, and so on.

REGIONAL ANTHOLOGIES

There is no end to anthologies, and I now come to a number of recent regional ones. For Lincoln MacVeagh of the Dial Press, Mary Sinton Leitch has compiled an anthology of poems by contemporary poets of the Old Dominion. The names of Virginia Moore and of Nancy Byrd Turner stand out particularly among these Virginian poets. Four of the women poets represented have as first name the name of their native state, an indication of local pride. In her preface Mrs. Leitch speaks of twenty years familiarity with Virginian poetry and of her aim to include "only those who have caught in vision something of the relationship between reality and the art of expression." There are no biographical notes. *Lyric Virginia Today* contains some good work. I shall place my money on Virginia Moore among her poets. Due to my liking for narrative verse, the last section, "History and Legend," particularly interested me. Virginia Lyne Tunstall's portrait of Evelyn Byrd is done with great charm and color, and a fine dashing ballad Lawrence Lee has made of Jack Jouett's ride. Henry Harrison of 27 East 7th Street, New York City, brings out a regular tome of *California Poets*, with an excellent foreword by one of the best of them, Helen Hoyt, who well explains the peculiarities of California, in terrain and climate, as material for descriptive poetry. When we read Miss Hoyt, or Sara Bard Field, or Charles Erskine Scott Wood, or Robinson Jeffers, we of course strike true gold. But the book is far too inclusive, and descends even to such incredible banalities of bad verse as

There's a land far across the Rockies,
Far from Eastern smoke and grime,
Where the mountains reach the sea-shore,
And the air is spiced, like wine.

It is indeed a far cry from such atrocious stuff, which almost swamps the large volume, to Marie de L Welch's fine "Angels," to Orrick Johns's "The Cardinal Bird," or to a real "find," the poems of a Japanese, one Bunichi Kagawa, which have startling originality. Were the book diminished to an eighth of its size, with rigorous exclusions, it would be enormously improved.

Again from Harrison we have *The Second Florida Poets*, with foreword by Vivian Yeiser Laramore, *District of Columbia Poets*, *Georgia Poets*, with foreword by Mary Brent Whiteside, *American College Verse*, illustrated by Charles Cullen, and *Silk of the Corn*, poems by members of the Iowa Federation of Women's Clubs, edited by Mrs. L. Worthington Smith. I have carefully searched these volumes for real poetry and have found none; only, very occasionally, a fairly accomplished verse or two.

MUCH MINOR VERSE

I could wish Mr. Harrison would restrain his uncontrollable impulse to publish everything in verse-form, but even as I say that I note four new small volumes from another publisher, the Kaleidograph Press of Dallas, Texas. These are *Roots of Understanding* by Margaret Laurie Seaman, *Sword of Laughter* by Goldie Capers Smith, *The Hill Road* by Margaret E. Bruner, and *A Kiss for Judas* by Florence Wilson Roper. It is truly amazing in this day and age how much mediocre verse is constantly bundled between boards! One gem from Mrs. Seaman's volume is "Mushroom,"

God must have thought and said "Come"—
And obeying, how quickly you came!
Pushing your head through the meadow sod,
Tangles of grass on your white top-knot,
Answering, "Here I am, God!"

Goldie Capers Smith is more literate, but what she has to say is little better. Mrs. Bruner writes in simple rhythms and the sonnet form, and her work is like a great deal of newspaper verse. Florence Wilson Roper expresses a few well-worn thoughts succinctly, and even writes two sonnets to President-Elect Roosevelt! But of what avail is all this minor verse? And these are not all that have come to me. "Free Verse," writes an Italian poet in *The Overland Monthly*, "is the music of the heart, the deep message of the soul!" and he sends me a paper-bound book of his poems called, *Youth;* while from Omaha, Nebraska, speed to me certain "Sonnets of Scenery," an enormous number of them crowded into infinitesimal type, a chance one beginning, "The juice that oozes from the black haw fruit has dripped its sweetness in a luncheon pail." And so it goes! *The American Literary Association Anthology* is just as mediocre as *Songs of the Spirit* from Boston's The Beacon Press. There is a theatrical term used to denote the utterly undistinguished. It is "ham." An afternoon spent with "ham" poetry will very nearly ruin one's faith in there being any such thing as good verse. And I have to attend the Poetry Society Banquet tonight!

In my youth the lyrical-minded all over the United States were complaining that they could not get their immortal works published. They can now, if not in one quarter then in another. And that fact has resulted in a deluge of mediocrity that can hardly be realized when one does not occupy the desk of poetry-editor on a journal such as this. The only excuse for non-recognition of a genuine talent when it appears—but it is, I think, a valid excuse—is that it is probably hidden under a bushel of thin volumes that induce such mental indigestion on the part of the conscientious reader that his judgment becomes utterly anesthetized!

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The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received.

Belles Lettres

THREE FRIENDS. By ROBERT BRIDGES. Oxford University Press. 1932. $2.50.

RECENT PROSE. By JOHN MASEFIELD. Macmillan. 1932. $3.

Of the late Poet Laureate's "Three Friends," Henry Bradley is the name most familiar to us, because of the Oxford Dictionary, of which he became editor in chief after the death of Murray. This short memoir of him was prefixed to "The Collected Papers of Henry Bradley," published in 1928. Bradley was a man of extraordinary ability, a born scholar, a natural linguist. In 1863 at the age of nineteen he knew several languages, enough to become corresponding clerk to an exporting firm in Sheffield, and remained there some twenty years. In 1883-4 two articles, on Taylor's Place Names and on the first instalment of the Dictionary, made aware those who were competent to know that he had become meanwhile an authority of the first rank in linguistic scholarship. He was immediately asked to join the staff of the Dictionary, and did become increasingly a participator, though it was not until 1896 that he moved from London to Oxford. There Bridges knew him intimately for the last twenty years of his life.

The other two friends were Digby Wackworth Dolben, a young poet and fellow Etonian, who was drowned at the age of nineteen, and Canon Dixon (Richard Watson), also a poet. The special interest of these to the larger world than the Oxford circle, is perhaps the glimpse obtained from their verse, letters, and Bridges's account, of the atmosphere surrounding that medievalistic or later romantic movement in England in the mid-nineteenth century, which showed itself so variously in Newman, Ruskin, Carlyle, the Pre-Raphaelites, and so on. Dixon was associated with the Pre-Raphaelites at Oxford, and Dolben's family were worried about his "romanizing tendencies" when he was a boy of fifteen at Eton.

Mr. Masefield's volume is more of a miscellany: Lectures on Shakespeare, Chaucer, Blake, Crabbe, Synge; fragments of letters from America; a story called "The Taking of Helen," where he hardly succeeds as well as Mr. Erskine at the revivification of Menelaus and his court; an article on "Fox Hunting" in explanation of what moved him to write "Reynard the Fox"; and on "Play Writing." Whatever Mr. Masefield writes is apt to be worth reading. One notices two characteristics of his prose style: its curious, attractive, almost mannered simplicity; and, secondly, that in this very simple manner he is saying a great many keen, wise, significant things in a very condensed way. It would be difficult to find the essentials of the subjects elsewhere put in such narrow space, and yet seeming to be quite casual and to have plenty of room, as in the lectures on Blake and Crabbe .

Fiction

AWAKE. By SUSAN PRIOR. New York: Robert Ballou. 1933. $1.50.

In capable prose, the authoress of this brief novelette probes into the mental and emotional tangles of a thoroughly neurotic and unpleasant young English woman. In the course of the twenty-four hour narrative, the anonymous heroine awakes to a sense of misery and disintegration, feeling she is unloved by the man she loves; goes to church, comes home, meets the American doctor she loves, walks with him, and succeeds in worming out of him a confirmation of her suspicions, plus the additional information that the reason for his disinclination towards her is a lack of physical attraction. Returning home, more disrupted than ever, she stews in her own juice, demonstrates a few more phases of her neurosis, sleeps, and wakes again to the belief that she doesn't love him.

As an exposition of this particular phase of female psychology, "Awake" is only adequate, it is not packed and final. A total absence of background precludes the possibility of the reader's thorough understanding; the heroine's unmistakable hypochondria and peculiarly unattractive personality, deal a deathblow to his sympathy. A finer artist might conceivably have triumphed over an unsympathetic heroine and offered an enduring portrait of this particular complex of emotions—frustrate love, self-searching, jealousy, bewilderment. Miss Prior's achievement here is of the slightest.

DANGEROUS CORNER. By J. B. PRIESTLEY and RUTH HOLLAND. Doubleday, Doran. 1933. $2.

The truth, as Mr. Priestley pointed out with some brutality in his play from which this novel has been made, is a sleeping dog which should be left lying. So much also might be said of Mr. Priestley's play. Even the best plays often make poor novels and this translation of Mr. Priestley's not greatly successful drama from the stage to the novel has not added strength to the original.

As on the stage, Mr. Priestley presents the members of a happy, cultivated group of people in a drawing room after dinner. Someone questions the virtue of the truth being frankly stated. Then Mr. Priestley by a device like a dream tells a version of the truth: A dead man they had honored is revealed as a fiend. One of the ladies was his mistress. Her brother was something less pleasant than that to him. Another pleasant lady admits she killed him. A gentleman admits himself a thief. The only moral survivor of the truth telling is self-convicted of blindness and stupidity.

It is to be inferred from Mr. Priestley's preface that Miss Holland rewrote the play into its present version. He merely stood by and advised. His reputation, however, will not be helped by this addition to his list of novels.

TROPICAL WINTER. By JOSEPH HERGESHEIMER. Knopf. 1933. $2.50.

Following closely in the wake of his genial observations on Berlin, are these ten untitled tales of Palm Beach by Mr. Hergesheimer. Again he offers recreational fare, for the holiday cruiser's suitcase. Yet something besides entertainment survives in the reader's mind, something induced by the pungent irony and satire contained therein, which causes him to reflect upon or at least recognize the emptiness, vanity, materialism, and sheer lack of vitality in the life of the world's most expensive but no longer exclusive resort. The people that prescribe for themselves such lives of narrowness and futility, are of course without imagination (or if they have any they stifled it.) They are conscious only of plucking the over ripe fruits of conventional pleasure at hand.

However, let it not be thought that here a competent novelist, romanticist, and skilled short story writer, has turned moralist. Mr. Hergesheimer has hugely enjoyed the writing of this book, and his chosen themes are consequently most tantalizing and provocative throughout.

To begin with, John Cleg and his socially ambitious wife, Clara, both from Paterson, in their "Dinner At Eight" interlude, explode at once the theory of everlasting sunshine and warmth, and prove the climate as fastidious and treacherous as the society of Palm Beach. Next, Charles Scarf, the self-made lumberman, finds his boyhood sweetheart, now a millionaire's widow, much changed after years of high-powered luxury living, and her sophisticated daughter more to his taste if not understanding. The author practises the same trick of style, employed by two such widely different contemporaries as Fanny Hurst and the late Arnold Bennett, that of listing foods, furnishings, clothes, jewels, etc. Frequently effective, this sometimes chokes the reader's fancy to the detriment of the whole. Mr. Hergesheimer excels in the reproduction of dull dinner conversation, and in sustaining the strictly modern temper of these tales. In an enervating climate with a falsely romantic glamor attendant, only three factors count in the tropical winter existence, money, social position (Society)—and sex running a poor third.

Somewhat less venom and acidity, might have been displayed, but no one familiar with his locale and its habitués, can accuse Mr. Hergesheimer of exaggeration; he merely displays the necessary coloration in his short story cycle. This reviewer ventures to add, that if a character-type from between these pages came across himself or herself in the reading, he would be too amused and dazzled by the author's cleverness (perhaps his misfortune as an artist) to be deeply shocked into self-recognition.

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The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the choice of books should be addressed to MRS. BECKER c/o *The Saturday Review*. As for reasons of space ninety percent of the inquiries cannot be answered in print, a stamped and addressed envelope should be enclosed for reply.

A. G. G., Carthage, Ill., asks if Lady Fraser's "Leaves from the Golden Bough" is selections from "The Golden Bough," by James George Fraser, saying that she is "very much interested in the quotations in Mrs. Paterson's 'Never Ask the End,'" which refers to "The Golden Bough."

THE epoch-making twelve-volume "Golden Bough" of Sir James Fraser was published between 1890 and 1914. I wonder how many of us came upon it in some library, all unknowing, and have reckoned the experience as a turning-point in life! A quiet, even velvet-footed book, to leave after it such a track of uprooted ideas. Sir James then set himself the task, in its own way as difficult as the initial undertaking, to reduce these dozen great volumes to one of not unwieldy size, keeping the conclusions and enough of the evidence to meet the needs of an inquiring but unscholarly reader, keeping even much of the cool charm of its style. It is this one volume edition of "The Golden Bough" (Macmillan) by which the work is of course now most widely known. Lady Fraser is a born writer for young people, a born storyteller; her "Leaves" and "The Singing Wood" (Macmillan) are for young people; they have the advantage over most folk and fairy tale books that they are prepared as it were in the temple precincts. But a grown-up reader can find such tales best in Sir James's own one-volume study of the world's ancient magic and its meanings.

E. R., Berkeley, Cal., going to the Mediterranean, wishes books for reading on the way there in a slow steamer. A good guidebook of the detailed price-and-schedule type is taken for granted; Baedeker's "Mediterranean" (Scribner) covers the whole territory, land and water. This is of course a handbook of practical information to be used on the spot; its style necessarily does not lend itself to steamer chair comfort. There is a new little book, inexpensive and astonishingly well-equipped for its size, "The Mediterranean," by Fletcher Allen and A. M. Hyamson (Dodd, Mead), made on a plan I have found practical for field use, for several handbooks of English counties have been made on it; an alphabetical arrangement with the size and shape of the type indicating the importance of the town, and a sort of description not unlike that one would use in telling a fellow-traveller what to look for if he were seeing for the first time what you had often seen. One who is going in this direction by car, by the way, should get the new motor guidebook by John Prioleau, "The Open Road Abroad" (Morrow), which is easy to consult in a hurry, clean-cut in its statements, and ingratiating in style.

Of the larger books, Rolland Jenkins's "The Mediterranean Cruise" (Putnam) has been taken on many such an excursion; it is like a travelogue and has many pictures. Albert Bigelow Paine's "Lure of the Mediterranean" (Harper) is a thoroughly attractive record of a cruise made in 1909, with photographs and drawings. Emil Ludwig's tour was made more lately; his swift sketches of Italy, Sicily, North Africa, and Egypt in "On Mediterranean Shores" (Little, Brown) are in his special striking manner. A favorite travel guide reaching its fifteenth edition in 1929, Daniel E. Lorenz's "New Mediterranean Traveller" (Revell), was revised and practically rewritten in that year to cover in one thin-paper volume the essentials of Mediterranean travel, with maps, pictures, and statistics. If this preliminary steamship journey is to be slow enough to put in some genuine study that is also genuinely interesting, take along "Mediterranean Lands," by Marion I. Newbegin (Knopf), explaining the development of civilization in relation to geographical conditions. A book like this may give one a better start than a history in terms of heroes and dynasties.

P. B. E., Fair Haven, Vermont, says, "Can you tell me the best book on the political and economic aspects of the Spanish Republic?" It is "Toward the New Spain," by Joseph A. Brandt, and it has just been published by the University of Chicago Press. It is dramatic, dynamic, and documented, and that makes a good combination for a survey of a subject still on the boil. There is a new guide-book, "Spain" (Simon & Schuster), edited by Lowell Thomas and Frank Schoonmaker, travellers whose names carry confidence to those in search of practical advice for non-millionaires; the style is friendly and the facts up-to-date. One gets an idea of the attitude of the late King of Spain from the careful report of conversations with him in "Twilight of Royalty," by Alexander, Grand Duke of Russia (Long & Smith), and of course there is "Death in the Afternoon," Ernest Hemingway's version of blood and sand (Scribner), by this time known to everyone who reads in America and most of those who look at pictures. This is, of course, Spain at the bullfight, neither contemporary nor ancient, just essential Spain—or so it seems to an American reader.

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AS the evil days drew nigh, William Knox began to have ruminative and melancholy pleasure in them. In the placidity of retirement at Great Ealing in Middlesex, far from "the Vortex of Politics," he forgot permanently the pressing cares of state (which had included the American War) and "confined my thoughts to subjects much more suitable to my Time of Life and state of Health." Knox was the last Englishman to enjoy the title of Under-Secretary of State for the American Department, that agitated office having lapsed with the recognition of independence. He knew America—at least he had been to America—and it was one of his misfortunes to air colonial views that won a reply from Edmund Burke. But by October of 1809, when Knox was seventy-seven years old, and within a year of his death, he could take pattern from the calm philosophy of the Psalmist—if not, as the event will show, with quite the same detachment:

> When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;
> What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

"Contemplation of a future State," he found, "leads to astronomical disquisitions," and this juxtaposition of spiritual and scientific considerations prompted him to communicate with Sir William Herschel (his elder by four years and his survivor by twelve) regarding the movement of the planets on their axes. Why was it that "Jupiter who is a thousand times bigger than the Earth, and two thousand times bigger than Mars, makes his revolution in little more than three-eighths of the time which each of them takes up with their's"?

The question was not put in utter disinterestedness:

> Every Approach we make towards a Knowledge of the Heavenly Bodies will assist us in forming juster Ideas of Heaven itself—You have supposed the whole created Universe forms one great Concave, and Milton has made Satan after passing through Chaos to land upon the convex, or outside of that Concave—If this be so, where shall we place the Seat of bliss on the place of the assembly of the 10,000 times 10,000 Angels who we are told surround the Throne of the Deity—We have local descriptions of Heaven and of Paradise, indeed we are told of three Heavens, or a third Heaven which implies two others, but in what part of Space are we to look for them?

A few days later he had his answer. Sir William, in half his words, indicated several factual errors in Mr. Knox's data, told him where he could find out all about the rotatory motion of the planets (a problem which "has not entirely escaped the inquisitive minds of astronomers") and in reply to the Grand Query said:

> It is true that the heavens appear to us as one great concave, but this we also know to be a mere consequence of the principle of Optics; the real extent or form of the universe is far beyond what we can have any conception of. An attempt to assign "a space for the seat of bliss or the assembly of angels," does not fall to the lot of astronomers who keep always within the range of facts that may be ascertained.

William Knox's troubled letter and Sir William Herschel's blunt reply are combined in an attractive pamphlet recently issued by the William L. Clements Library for the National Academy of Sciences and bearing the imprint of the University of Michigan Press, for the originals of both communications are in the great Clements collection as a part of the Knox papers acquired by the library in 1931. The frontispiece of the brochure is a reproduction of the representation of the solar system made by Amos Doolittle for Jedidiah Morse's "Geography Made Easy" (Boston, 1790), picturing the orbit of "Herschell" (Uranus) beyond that of Saturn. Nearly a quarter century would elapse after Herschel's death before Adams and Leverrier, disturbed by certain inconsistencies in the motions of Uranus, and prosecuting their researches independently, would postulate the existence of a more distant planet still—and at their bidding Neptune was projected on the celestial map. The spirit of William Knox had already learned, perhaps, that Heaven exceeded his wildest expectations.

J. T. W.

Exhibitions

IT is one of the misfortunes of this reviewer that he is not able to attend the New York exhibitions as promptly as he could wish, and so notices of those which are of interest to readers of this column are sometimes delayed. There have been four exhibitions, of recent months worth seeing: two of them are over with, but because they were important some notice should be taken here.

At the New York Public Library there was held in the summer a showing of a large collection of specimen books of types and printers' ornaments. Such an exhibition is naturally of much interest to printers, and equally little interest to the general public because of the highly technical nature of its items. But for printers it had a considerable importance, and partly because such displays are uncommon.

At the Grolier Club there has just closed an extensive exhibition of the work of Mr. Bruce Rogers which was well worth seeing. In the whole history of printing there has never been a printer who, in his manipulation of the printed page, has used so many styles, and used them so well. De Vinne knew his type faces, and he knew how they had been used. He printed in a considerable variety of styles. But he did not use his knowledge or his types to produce beautiful books. Mr. Rogers has ransacked the printer's repertory of type and ornament, to select unerringly the best forms; he has studied the work of the best printers, and in almost every case has carried their styles to perfection. It was a formidable body of work which was assembled at the Grolier Club. Not only was it a review of the great styles of the past, the printing of Venice and Paris and London at their best, but it was a series of lovely books printed by a man who had not attempted to copy a style but who had absorbed its essence. No such catholic collection can be made of any printer's work, nor, I think, can any collection be made which more justly could be called "fine printing."

At the Century Club there has just opened a showing of trade editions by American publishers and of material illustrating the design of type and the making of printing blocks. The exhibition has been set up by Mr. Rudolph Ruzicka. The center cases, of trade books, are of moderate interest, but might just as well have been omitted. What distinguishes the show is the series of charts on the walls, arranged by Mr. Ruzicka in effective fashion. They show the processes of type making through the designs for letters, actual specimens of lead type, the point system of sizes, etc., the various type-setting machines, different kinds of illustrations—wood blocks, half-tones, multicolor blocks—and the different methods of printing — letter-press, lithography, photogravure, etc. Not too elaborate for easy comprehension, it yet covers the field adequately. A catalogue, with a foreword by Mr. Royal Cortissoz, is in preparation.

At the New York Public Library there is at present a small but delightful show by the Oxford University Press. Clarendon's "History" and the new Bruce Rogers Bible in the same room would distinguish any show; but they are only a portion of it. It should not be missed by lovers of printing and lovers of books.

R.

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Trade Winds

By P. E. G. QUERCUS

POOR Old Quercus was distressed to observe that a reporter from the *Yale News*, interviewing Mr. Canby on Trends in Literature, wrote that "The editor lit another cigarette and looked at the ceiling of his drab New York office."

The editorial office, we insist, is far from drab. If the Yale reporter knew what the staff endured, not many months ago, when these premises were repainted, he would have been kinder. What misled the reporter was the fact (which we applaud) that there is nothing overtly literary or hyperæsthetic about the very plain quarters of this journal. There has been some surprise expressed at the highly ornamented calendar—given us annually by Mr. Cleon Throckmorton the distinguished scenic designer. It hangs in the small reception room and catches the eye: This year it says "CLEON THROCKMORTON, FRESH FISH. *If It Swims, Floats, or Clings to a Rock, We Have It.*" Certainly that is not drab; nor the photograph of the *Tusitala* under full press of canvas; nor the coat of arms of Sir Kenelm Digby; nor the illuminated MS of a poem by Lord Dunsany which hangs over the Editor's desk.

There is a decent Quakerish severity about the trimmings of this office, but Old Quercus deplores the word *drab*. Think of the Mermaids, for instance.

And if the *Yale News* thought Mr. Canby's room drab, with its bright 45th Street daylight streaming over the roof of the Harvard Club, what would he have said of those small rearward kennels where the Phœnician and Old Quercus, uncomplaining hoplites, perform their sombre chores?

⁂ ⁂

The Goldhill Restaurant at 1 Frankfort Street, much patronized by downtown bookmen, run (as we have remarked before) by some of Mouquin's old boys, wishes to remark that it has long made a specialty of *Cassoulet à la Castelnaudary*. Let us also add that it is probably the only place in town where *Crepe Suzette* may be had for 50 cents.

⁂ ⁂

One of the pleasantest book pages we've ever seen is the Booklovers' Corner in the February issue of good old *St. Nicholas*. The review department in *St. Nicholas* is now conducted by Dorothy E. Reid, who is herself a poet of beautiful talent, and her Valentine reviews in rhyme are done with delightful grace. Houghton Mifflin and Doubleday, Doran, whose juveniles are praised by Miss Reid in charming verse, should be greatly complimented.

⁂ ⁂

Perhaps booksellers have again begun to Eat, for Old Quercus has noted in this department a revival of interest in Rich Food. He recalls with sentimental twinges that just about a year ago the hospitable Stanley Horn, of the *Southern Lumberman*, took him to lunch at the Hermitage Club in Nashville where he encountered all sorts of nourishments never heard of round here. Consider *Fried Crappie in corn meal* (crappie is a fish); *Boiled Jowl with Turnip Greens; Spiced Round with Potato Salad; Smoked Sausage and Hominy*. Old Quercus's table-motto was always *Nihil hominy a me alienum puto*. And one of the sayings of the Three Hours for Lunch Club used to be, 50 Million Trenchermen Can't Be Wrong.

⁂ ⁂

We look forward with special curiosity to the fortunes of *British Agent*, by R. H. Bruce Lockhart, which seemed to us a book of remarkable power and candor. What a self-examining pang most men must have when they read the analysis Mr. Lockhart quotes from his Russian *amie* Moura who describes him as "a little clever but not clever enough, a little strong, but not strong enough; a little weak but not weak enough."

But this book shows him perhaps stronger than Moura guessed. It is a remarkable achievement.

⁂ ⁂

Like most authors, Mark Twain did much pondering on the problem of book distribution. I note that in the collection of Mark Twain letters and MSS sold recently by Chicago Book and Art Auctions, Inc., one item was a sort of catechism written out by Mark on the subject of selling books by mail.

He used to say, you remember, that "Anything but subscription publication is just printing for private circulation."

Charles Sessler, the much admired

bookseller in Philadelphia, celebrated the 50th anniversary of his business by striking a beautiful bronze medal of Charles Dickens, his favorite author. The portrait is from an actual photograph; the reverse is a replica in relief of the famous frontispiece of *A Christmas Carol*, which Eddie Newton has called "the gayest little picture in all the world." Mr. Sessler gave away a few copies of this charming medal to old patrons and friends last Christmas.

Dickensians on Fifth Avenue were also lately startled to see a set of the works in fine binding in the window of Black, Starr & Frost-Gorham, the eminent jewelers. The occasion for this was their display of silver book-markers silhouetting the traditional drawings of Dickens's characters.

⁂ ⁂

☞ O'Malley's well known second-hand bookstore, favorite evening prowl of connoisseurs in the region of the Natural History Museum, is moving across the street, from 329 Columbus Avenue to 312 (between 74 and 75 Streets). ☞ Old George Seiffert, senior salesman for Doubleday, Doran, got a new slant on the Autograph Mania when Miss Truman of Strawbridge Clothier's book department (Philadelphia) persuaded him to autograph four copies of a book for customers because his name was mentioned in the dedication. ☞ Marcia Passage of the Sunwise Turn bookshop (44 Street) reproached Old Quercus for persuading her to read *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, which (she says) gave her the horrors. ☞ We are advising Marcia to keep away from *Burn, Witch, Burn*, by A. Merritt (Liveright), which also has some real grizzle and shiver. ☞ We look forward to seeing *Memories of a Misspent Youth*, by Grant Richards, the London publisher; it should be of much interest to The Trade. ☞ There has been much revival of interest lately in Bellamy's *Looking Backward;* Houghton Mifflin's reprint edition ($1.00), with a preface by Heywood Broun, is timely. ☞ Old Quercus, though baffled by many things, is heartily pleased by the continuing and solid success of that fine book, *Mutiny on the Bounty*. ☞ William H. Robinson, of 16 Pall Mall, London, offers George Washington's walking stick for sale for £85. "Of Amazon Snake Wood, with Horn Knob inlaid with 13 stars in gold." ☞ Which reminds us that several thoughtful readers, observing that Woe÷Weal seems now to be an Improper Fraction, have found escape and good opiate in Professor Carl Becker's *The Heavenly City of the 18th-Century Philosophers* (Yale Press). ☞ The Macmillan Company, procurator here for the Cambridge Univ. Press, has issued a fine little series of pocket reprints ($1.00 each), including Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes of Samuel Johnson* and Cecil Torr's *Small Talk at Wreyland*. This latter, the London *Observer* called "The very ideal of luxurious reading."

⁂ ⁂

Mr. S. C. Roberts, in his introduction to the Macmillan reprint of Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes*, recalls a parlor game which Mrs. Thrale and her guests at Streatham enjoyed playing. It seems to have been a variant on the game of Truth, an assessment of character based upon marks candidly awarded for various qualities. The divisions of score-sheet were Religion, Morality, Scholarship, General Knowledge, Person & Voice, Manners, Wit, Humour, Good Humour. A perfect score in each of these divisions was 20. Mrs. Thrale kept a record of Dr. Johnson's character as recorded by her drawing-room circle. It went thus:—

Religion—20
Morality—20
Scholarship—19
General Knowledge—20
Person & Voice—0
Manners—0
Wit—15
Humour—16
Good Humour—0

Mr. Roberts quotes from *Thraliana* some of the other marks allotted to victims of this famous parlor game. Sir Joshua Reynolds got 0 for both Religion and Morality. Garrick rated only 3 in Scholarship. Boswell was graded 19 in Good Humour. Mr. Thrale, the host, got 18 for Religion, 17 for Morality, but drew a duck in Wit, Humour, and Good Humour.

Perhaps one of the rules of this classic amusement should be that the score-sheets be immediately destroyed.

Apropos of the recent formation of a Horatian Society, the London *Observer* remarks: "Of all the classics Horace was the oftenest to be found in the pocket. One recalls how Mrs. Gladstone and her sister (Lady Lyttelton), married on the same day, compared notes as to their emotions when the two bridegrooms took copies of Horace out of their pockets to help pass the time on the honeymoon journeys."

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Arthur Christy's *The Orient in American Transcendentalism*—a study of Emerson, Thoreau, and Alcott—is the first "chapter" in that as yet unaccomplished study which Romain Rolland considered, in *Prophets of the New India*, "a matter deep interest." Mr. Christy's book, $4.(is published by Columbia Universi Press, 2960 Broadway, New York Cit

PERSONALS

ADVERTISEMENTS will be accepted in this column for things wanted or unwanted; personal service to let or required; literary or publishing offers not easily classified elsewhere; miscellaneous items appealing to a select and intelligent clientèle; exchange and barter of literary property or literary services; jobs wanted, houses or camps for rent, tutoring, travelling companions, ideas for sale; communications of a decorous nature; expressions of opinion (limited to fifty lines). Rates: 7 cents per word. Address Personal Dept. Saturday Review, 25 West 45th Street, New York City.

FORMER TEACHER — middle twenties, desires employment—tutor, companion, or allied occupations; excellent references. B.A. Degree.

HAVE YOU a good idea for a radio serial for children; 8-10 characters, mostly adults? Combined with my new merchandizing plan, there's a good chance for a sale. Script writing ability not essential—just want the glimmer. References given covering honorable intent. Radio, Box 114.

DIRECTOR for Little Theatre, engaged until Feb. 23, can give your play a real production. Amply qualified and experienced. Talk it over with your group, then write for details to *Director*, Box 115.

SWARTHY CUSTOMER who ascended outside stairway of English Book Shop, 55 East 55, in bright wintry weather, carrying copy Harold Nicolson's grand book *Public Faces*, please communicate BARON CORVO (OLD CROW).

FUGITIVE FROM COG-WHEELS, admirer of sparkles of mica on pavement of Fifth Avenue near 42, would like job near by where he can see them at lunch time. Educated at Harvard and Weehawken. CORIOLANUS.

PRAIRIE BELLE—Don't forget the human element.—SAND, GRAVEL, GRIT.

CHARLOTTE GLACÉE — Long silence deplored. Where were you? Have you tried Potage Nids d'Hirondelle?—GRAND CENTRAL.

PRACTITIONER OF MIRTH, withdrawn from circulation (N. Y. Marriage Certificate 505009) waves goodbye from horizon.

WRITING THESIS (Ph.D.) on Racial Name-changes, please inform is BRAM STOKER abbreviation of ABRAHAM?—COLUMBIA SEMINAR.

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The AMEN CORNER

The recent death of George Moore made us re-read the delightful little book on *George Moore* by Humbert Wolfe[1] which the Oxford University Press[2] published last year. It is "A Day with George Moore" rather than a biography, and Mr. Wolfe has blended Moore's style so deftly with his own that it is actually a new *Conversation in Ebury Street.*

After that we turned, as we do now on all occasions, to the *Oxford Companion to English Literature.* Indeed we keep one copy at home and another on our desk at the office, and we advise anybody who has anything to do with writing or reviewing or teaching or editing or preaching or *reading* to do the same. Librarians have all bought it on sight; we will give away state secrets to the extent of quoting what Dr. W. Warner Bishop, Librarian of the University of Michigan, has written to the publishers: "Sir Paul Harvey's compilation, *The Oxford Companion to English Literature,* seems one of the most useful books I have ever encountered. In fact, I have found difficulty in keeping myself from reading it in my office hours because on every page that one opens, there are extraordinary interesting entries. I can see at once that this is going to be very useful in libraries, and I am not surprised that you have had to reprint it already. Making the acquaintance of a book like this is a heartening experience in these days when there is so much to try one's soul."

When we looked up George Moore we found also Edward Moore (author of *The Gamester*), Dr. John Moore (author of *Zeluco*), his son Sir John (whose corpse to the ramparts was hurried)[4], his namesake plain John Moore ("author of the celebrated worm powder"), and of course Thomas Moore.

As our eye strayed over the page we found ourselves reading the plot of *The Moonstone* by Wilkie Collins.[5] But we hurried over "Moody and Sankey" to "Montrachet," where we were admonished to "see *Burgundy.*" We did: we saw that Montrachet is "the finest of the white burgundies," that Chambertin was Napoleon's favorite wine, that Pommard is "less eminent," and that the earliest reference to burgundy wine in England is in Wycherley's *Love in a Wood.* (On Wycherley you can't do better than read Bonamy Dobrée in *Restoration Comedy.*[5])

The very next entry was, curiously enough, *The Burial of Sir John Moore,* and further down a long account of Edmund Burke, leading us on through such enticing topics as Burlesque, Busiris, Bussy D'Ambois, and *The Busybody,* to the Butler tribe, Button's Coffee-house, Mr. Serjeant Buzfuz, and the unhappy Admiral Byng, shot, as Voltaire wrote in *Candide,* "pour encourager les autres."

We promised ourselves to stop here, but could not resist going on to "Byronic, characteristic of or resembling Lord Byron or his poetry," where we learned that Meredith defined it as "posturing statuesque pathetic," and that Macaulay described Byron as "a man proud, moody, cynical, with defiance on his brow, and misery in his heart, a scorner of his kind, implacable in revenge, yet capable of deep and strong affection."[6]

Though "Cabell, James Branch" lures us on to the next section, we feel we must stop somewhere.

We are now eagerly awaiting the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*[8] which will be published on March 9th. It is adapted from the *Oxford English Dictionary* of which the first part appeared in 1884 and the last in 1928, and which is acknowledged to be the greatest completed dictionary in any language. The editors have had the unique advantage of using its materials and results. But they have also been able to use the materials which accumulated during its long course through the press; and particularly, the collections for an ample Supplement of new words and phrases which is expected to appear in the autumn of 1933.

If like us you have long coveted the great ten volume *Oxford English Dictionary* but have neither the money to purchase it nor the space to house it, you will find a pleasing and adequate refuge in the S. O. E. D. THE OXONIAN.

OUR BOOK-OF-THE-MONTH: The *Oxford Companion to English Literature.* $4.50. Send for prospectus.

(1) $1.50. (2) 114 Fifth Avenue. (3) In the *World's Classics.* 80c. (4) Charles Wolfe: "The Burial of Sir John Moore." In the *Oxford Book of English Verse.* $3.00. On India Paper, $3.75. (5) $2.00. (6) *Literary Essays.* In the *Oxford Standard Authors.* $1.50. (7) In Volume 7 of the *Oxford Thackeray.* 17 volumes, $3.00 each. (8) Two volumes, $18.00.

The PHŒNIX NEST

FROM England comes this verse to us, signed with the name *Autolycus:*

Father Time's gone rabbit-hunting.
Our latest poet is Basil Bunting.

And yet, to render tit for tat, we have our answer very pat:

To admit defeat we are not willing.
We have one named Lionel Trilling.

And speaking of poets, *Frank Ernest Hill,* co-author with *Joseph Auslander* of "The Winged Horse," has a new book that John Day is publishing called "What is American?" He finds the American quality quite as definite and separate as the African or the Oriental. He can make clear to you the characteristics of our national individuality. . . .

The Gosden Head, publishers of Sporting Books and Prints, at 205 East 42nd Street, sends us a copy of the "Eneas Africanus" they published on December 15th at seven-fifty. It's a first de luxe edition of a story by *Harry Stillwell Edwards* which was written in 1919 and made its first appearance in book form in 1920. In the last twelve years it has sold over a million copies, which seems to be a record for a book of this kind. It has been called "one of the greatest American short stories ever written." It deals with the wanderings of an old colored man, and is by way of being a Southern classic. The present edition is limited to 850 copies. . . .

This month (February) Putnam is publishing a book that should appeal to all who took to *David Garnett's* "Lady Into Fox" and *John Collier's* "His Monkey Wife." It is a sardonic story of Virginia Hutton and her adopted orang-outang, Appius, and is naturally entitled "Appius and Virginia." The author is *Gertrude* Trevelyan, who traces her descent back to an ancient Cornish family, the Trevelyans of Nettlecomb, Somerset. She lives in Reading, England, and for the last four years has been studying at Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford. She was the first woman to be awarded the Newdigate Prize for English verse at Oxford and is only twenty-three years of age. Truly a young phenomenon! . . .

There has been a slight misunderstanding in regard to "The Book of Vagabonds" *not* "Omnibus of Adventure." "The Book of Vagabonds" was published on January 27th by Coward-McCann, *not* by Longmans. It *does* contain "From Job to Job" by Fletcher. It also contains two other titles. It is a neat bargain, twelve dollars worth of books for the price of one ($2.50). The point is that the director of public relations" of the house of Dodd, Mead, was unintentionally in error when he attributed the Coward, McCann book to Longmans. So we hope this correction is now clear. Speaking of Dodd, Mead, toward the end of this month they are bringing out that new *Bernard Shaw* book, "The Adventures of The Black Girl in Her Search for God." It is illustrated with woodcuts of the Black Girl herself, and, in one or two instances, of someone who looks very much like the author. . . .

Beginning February 18th, at the Art Center, 65 East 56th Street, and continuing for two weeks, there will be an exhibition of more than thirty of "the most notable books produced in 1932," selected by a one-man jury, and culled from over 450 books submitted by publishers and printers throughout the United States. The exhibition will be under the auspices of The Limited Editions Club, *George Macy,* director. The man who put his head in the hangman's noose as "one-man jury" is Mr. Macy himself! . . .

Before *Thayer Hobson* sailed for Europe he called our attention to certain books that William Morrow & Company are issuing this month and next. There's *Evelyn Eaton's* "Desire—Spanish Version," this month; and on March first we shall have "Enchanted Sand," which Thayer says is a sort of cross between a travel book and a spiritual adventure. He expects to be back in this country by March fifteenth, when Morrow will publish "Damned if They Do," by *Helena Huntington Smith,*—a provocative title! . . .

We throw our bonnet in the air for *Isabel Wilder's* "Mother and Four" (Coward, McCann). When we used to know Miss Wilder we had no idea she was secreting a novel in her mind. She is the sister of *Thornton Wilder,* of course, and we think *Vanity Fair* missed a trick recently, when, on a page devoted to writing families, they didn't include the Wilders. . . .

By the way, this isn't Isabel Wilder's first novel. She wrote her first ten years ago. It was rejected by an English publisher and she burnt it. Which displayed great strength of character. Few young authors have the good sense to do that. . . .

Edwin Valentine Mitchell has returned to bookselling. Mr. Mitchell sold his interest in the Lewis Street Book Store in Hartford two years ago to *James T. Soby.* Now he will again be president of the corporation and the business will resume its old name of Edwin Valentine Mitchell, Inc. Mr. Mitchell has a fine reputation as a bookman. He is the author of "Morocco Bound: Adrift Among Books," "Concerning Beards," "The Doctor in Court," a legal work, and, published recently, "Curiosities of Literature," selections from the voluminous work of *Isaac Disraeli.* Two years ago, when Mr. Mitchell left the book business, it was to devote himself exclusively to publishing, in conjunction with Dodd, Mead of New York, who were his distributors. . . .

The death of *Sara Teasdale* comes as a profound shock to all lovers of poetry in America. It is a genuine loss to literature that she did not live to complete her biography of Christina Rossetti. Her reputation will endure as a remarkably fine lyricist. The many admirers of her work will feel that an irrecoverably fine intuitive grace of expression has gone with her passing. . . .

Let us say our word for "Company K," by *William March,* the book of war sketches published by Harrison Smith and Robert K. Haas. *Christopher Morley* has commented upon March's courage in writing this "anthology of dismay," and we thoroughly agree with him. There is some of the most trenchant irony in the book that we have lately encountered. Though unassuming in manner, it yet lands a terrific body-blow against modern warfare. It merely recounts, through the mouths of average soldiers, what are convincing facts, and horrible ones. We believe in books on war written by men who have actually endured the front-line trenches, not by theorists who have never been out of their office chairs or by staff officers who knew nothing of the hell of the front line. William March, the author, won several decorations for valor. He is no theorist. He tells what he saw and heard. . . .

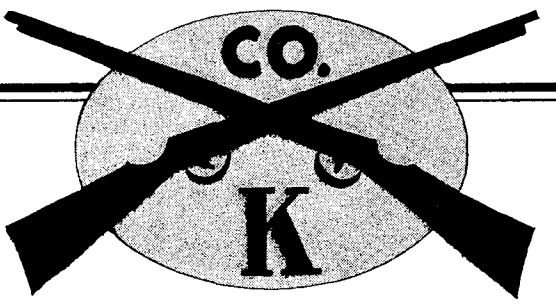
In the Spring Smith and Haas are also bringing out a volume of forty-five poems by *William Faulkner,* entitled "The Green Bough." It is to be decorated by *Lynd Ward.* The probable price will be a dollar seventy-five. An autographed edition, strictly limited to 350 copies, will be available at three-fifty. . . .

This month Liveright, Inc., will publish *Robinson Jeffers's* latest volume of poetry, "Give Your Heart to the Hawks," and "Key West and The Collected Poems of *Hart Crane,*" edited, and with an introduction, by *Waldo Frank.* This volume will contain not only "The Bridge" and "White Buildings," but Hart Crane's last poems, which he expected to publish under the title: "Key West—An Island Sheaf." . . .

Walter de La Mare is editing the selected letters and poems of *George Edward Woodberry,* which Houghton Mifflin will publish. . . .

A book published by W. W. Norton & Company which sounds interesting is "American Folk Art," which bears the subtitle of "The Art of the Common Man in America, 1750-1900." It is the first book to collect examples of the work of those anonymous artists, the carpenters, sign painters, blacksmiths, and housewives of our country. There are seventy-nine full-page illustrations, the book being another joint production by Norton and the Museum of Modern Art. Here you will find cigar-store Indians, ships' figureheads, portraits, and landscapes by house painters, and flower pieces on velvet by boarding-school misses.

THE PHŒNICIAN.



CORPORAL ROSE spotted a periscope concealed under a tomato crate and got the Navy Cross.

SERGEANT TIETJEN, rifleman, imagined the distant Germans he killed were dolls, too small to feel pain or sorrow.

LIEUTENANT BARTELSTONE was saved from suicide by a picture of Lillian Gish which he kept next his heart throughout the War.

CAPTAIN MATLOCK commanded the slaughter of twenty German prisoners in a ravine beside the trenches.

PRIVATE DRURY threw down his rifle and ran away.

PRIVATE WHITE was given a pet fawn by a French woman and killed it for stew.

PRIVATE WEBSTER made the girl he was engaged to marry him when he returned with a ravaged face.

OVER A HUNDRED MORE AMERICANS AT WAI

IN COMPANY K

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